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A BOOK
FOR & ABOUT BOYS

BY ONE WHO KNOWS THEM

BULLY



BOYS AND THEIR WAYS.

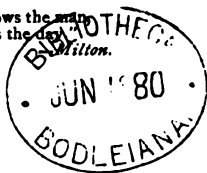
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BOYS AND THEIR WAYS.

A Book for and about Boys.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS THEM.

"The childhood shows the man.
As morning shows the day."
Milton.



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JOHN HOGG, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1880.

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 With a well-chosen book or friend !"
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PREFACE.

“**B**OYS and their Ways!” The reader will think, perhaps, that the size of my book is not at all in proportion to the extent of my subject; that there are almost as many “ways” as there are “boys,” and that, to do justice to them, I should need as large and close a folio as any in which our forefathers delighted, or as numerous a series of volumes as those which Mademoiselle de Scudery was accustomed to devote to the adventures of her fictitious heroes and heroines. But boys, like men, fall naturally into a certain number of classes, each of which has its well-known characteristics; and in describing these classes it is possible to describe the great world of boys with quite sufficient accuracy. I might go further and say, that all boys may be divided into two great sections: the good boys and the bad. Both these sections, at all events, come under notice in the following pages; the latter by way of warning only and incidentally, for to dwell upon them at length would be waste of time: *they* are not likely to read their own description. Now, in every boy’s life occurs, sooner or later, a critical epoch, when he has to make up his mind to which section he

will belong ; and while he is making up his mind—as, thank God, he generally does—to join the good, there must be a period of hesitation and doubt and difficulty, in which he lies peculiarly open to temptation. One of my objects in writing “Boys and their Ways” has been to counsel and strengthen, by example and precept, the tyro while he undergoes this probation ; and I hope that my book will assist him to decide quickly in favour of the right, and to persevere in well-doing when the decision has been made. I trust that its perusal will make him a better son, a better brother, a more obedient and industrious student. I trust it will inspire him with a love of truth, with a thirst after knowledge, with a desire to think generously and live nobly. It will lead him, I hope, to the study of nature, and show him what sources of wholesome entertainment lie always at his command. And in itself it will furnish—at least such is my ambition—some pleasant and profitable reading for a leisure hour.

I have had much to do with boys, and may claim, therefore, to have written with a competent knowledge of my subject. And here they will be found “in their habit as they live ;” as they are, or might be, or should be, “at home” and “at school,” in the study and in the playground, in hours of work and hours of recreation ; in their struggles, sufferings, hopes, fears, and aspirations ; in their friendships and their little enmities ; in their relations to their masters and to one another. I have had something to say, not, I trust, altogether ineffectively, about their lessons and amusements, their good and bad habits, their temptations and their trials. I have also sketched them in the various aspects of country life, and accompanied them in their “walks abroad,” their nutting and blackberrying expeditions, their woodland rambles and seaside

adventures. I have "looked in" upon them in the winter season, with their skating and sleighing and grand snowball "bickers," and shared in their Christmas merrymaking, with its "round games" and "private theatricals." In more serious mood, I have put together some practical hints upon the qualities by which men become useful citizens and good Christians, and have added a chapter upon reading, which contains carefully compiled lists of the books in poetry, history, fiction, biography, and general literature, that boys ought to read. And, finally, I have ventured to portray the ideal boy—a standard of perfection to which, perhaps, none may fully attain, though all should set it before them as a desirable goal.

Sensible, from long experience, of the value of example, I have plentifully strewn my pages with anecdote and biographical illustration. And throughout I have borne in mind the golden words of Jean Paul in his "*Levana*:"—"Honour, honesty, firm will, truthfulness, advancing in spite of threatening wounds, endurance of misfortune, of the blows of fate, frankness, self-respect, self-balance, contempt of opinion, justice, and perseverance—all these and similar words denote only one-half of the moral nature, moral strength, and elevation. The second part refers to all included in the kingdom of love, gentleness, and beneficence: these may be called moral beauty." That the reader should be better and wiser and happier for the time he gives up to me, when engaged with this little volume, has been constantly in my thoughts while writing. I trust he will not find me a dull companion. I am sure I have striven to be a candid friend; and it may be that even those "old boys" who were once young boys—old boys who are now "fathers and guardians"—may not object to my

holding them by the button and gossiping with them about scenes and characters, studies and pastimes, which "in the long ago" figured so largely in their lives, and even now are so tenderly cherished in their memories.

"Oh, happy years ! once more who would not be—a boy ?"





CHAPTER I.

THE BOY AT HOME.

"There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest."

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Definition of "a boy"—Boys not alike—Various types—The boy best studied "at home"—At school he loses his individuality—At home he may be seen as he is—Lord Macaulay's home-life in his boyhood—James Watt—Ferguson—Dr. Robertson—Faraday—Washington—A protest against too much "play"—The character must be shaped and good habits acquired at home—The boy in his relations to his father and his mother—"What will my mother think?" an anecdote—Great men and their mothers—Boys and their brothers and sisters—Brotherly love illustrated—On the importance of good manners—Politeness in the family—Kind words—Studying in the holidays—Reading at home—Early rising—Anecdotes and examples—Pleasures of early rising—Perseverance—A short story—Sticking to one's work—Alexander Anderson—A golden word to remember—William Jackson—Hippolyte Flandrin—Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith"—Conquering a bad temper—Abauzit of Geneva—St. Francis de Sales—Miseries of a bad temper—Persevere!—Truthfulness—Anecdotes and examples—Fatal consequences of lying—A young hero—Keeping your eyes open—How to see and what to see—Anecdote of the Duke of Wellington—How some people wear "glasses"—Doing in the day the day's work—Procrastination is the thief of time—A song for every day.

IF I were writing a treatise on natural history, and wanted to define the animal "boy," I should be greatly puzzled. That is, I should be greatly puzzled if I relied upon "authorities," for they do not differ more respecting the chronology of Manetho or the object of the Great Pyramid than they do in reference to the

characteristics and qualifications of the said animal. Granted that he is a biped and a mammal, with a brain and a heart—(but is this granted?)—warm-blooded, five-fingered, and the like; what is to be said of his moral qualities? According to some, he is quarrelsome, refractory, idle, selfish; according to others, lazy, negligent, apathetic; according to others, high-spirited, active, generous, but stupid; and according to others again—but these are indulgent grandmothers—he is a miracle of physical energy and intellectual vivacity. His detractors say he is “fit for nothing,” and (forgetting their own boyhood) never will be fit for anything; his friends (alas! they are few) affirm that he is gifted with all the virtues, and will inevitably work out a most brilliant career. And the difficulty is, not only that such diverse opinions prevail as to the genus, but that even as to a particular individual of the genus they are usually most astonishingly antagonistic. You will find the same boy described by A. as indolent and incapable; by B. as a good lad, who might be anything if he tried; by C. as a noble fellow, who will laugh at the frowns of circumstance and conquer Fortune. Nay, more; you will find him characterised in the most contradictory manner by one and the same person. The boy who is pointed at as a monster in the morning will be eulogised as an angel before night! This violent oscillation of opinion is generally observed in female critics, the boy’s “sisters, or his cousins, or his aunts;” but everybody will see that it helps to increase the dubiety with which an impartial naturalist approaches the subject. With regard to other animals, it is possible to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. There are fixed and authentic data to guide us. We know nowadays even what a chameleon is, and have settled the origin of a barnacle goose. We have ascertained that the lion is not half so fine a quadruped as he was painted; and everybody can tell you that the sloth, *Bradypus tridactylus*, does not deserve the English name he bears. You have only to visit the nearest aquarium to ascertain all about the octopus, and convict Monsieur Victor Hugo of tremendous exaggeration in his account of that monster of the deep. The animal world has been examined and classified and microscopified to the minutest fragment of protoplasm or bathybius. But when we turn to the genus “Puer” (family *Homo*, order *Adolescens*),

we find ourselves launched all at once into an ocean of doubt and hesitation. Not for want of *specimens*—oh ! dear no ; *they* abound—but because observers are apparently unable to agree in the result of their observations.

It is true that Mr. Shirley Hibberd asserts that boys are all alike, except as to the colour of the hair or pinafore ; that they all inherit the same pride, the same “devil-may-care” ambition, the same spirit of mischief, and the same freemasonry of mutual confidence : but wiser and more careful critics know that this is a grave error. No doubt the *genus* has certain well-marked characteristics which are to be found in all its species and individuals ; but as much may be said of the genus *Felis* or the genus *Canis*, and yet it would be wrong to say that all cats or all dogs are alike. Mr. Hibberd goes on to inquire :—“Where is the boy who is willing to be outdone by a playmate ? Where is the boy who will acknowledge to being beaten in fight with one of another school ?” But these questions prove nothing. They apply only to what naturalists call “generic characters,” and do not affect the distinctive qualifications of individuals. Boys all alike ! Why, they differ as much as men ! There are boy-Washingtons, boy-Borgias, boy-Napoleons, boy-Cromwells, boy-Wallaces, boy-Newtons. There is the boy who loves truth, and the boy who delights in fibs ; the boy who shares his cake with his schoolfellow, as King Alfred shared his loaf with the beggar ; and the boy who hoards it in his secret cell, as Elwes, the miser, hoarded his useless gold. There is the brave boy, with honour bright as a warrior’s sword ; and the cowardly boy, who, to save his skin or spare his comfort, descends to any meanness. There is the industrious boy, who sows that he may reap ; and the idle boy, who cares neither for seed-time nor harvest. And it is just because of this vast variety in the species of the genus that the naturalist feels it so irksome a task to arrive at an accurate and comprehensive definition.

After all, if we wish to attain to anything like exactness, we must study the boy at home. At school he loses much of his individuality, and assumes more of the “generic characters ;” though the *extent* of this assumption necessarily depends upon the temperament and disposition of the individual. In a crowd everybody feels inclined to do what his neighbour does. If you plunge into a mob shouting, as London mobs shout

upwards of a century ago, "Wilkes and Liberty!" the chances are that you will shout "Wilkes and Liberty" also. There is a certain magic in the influence of association to which we are all of us more or less subject. The calmest will share in the excitement of his neighbours; a member of the Peace Association will hurrah if involved in the midst of a multitude who are welcoming a successful warrior. That which makes us *ourselves* is temporarily overcome by that which makes our affinity with our fellows. So in the school or the playground; Aristides and Cato are Aristides and Cato no longer; they are scholars in the same class or members of the same "eleven;" and Aristides puts off his robe of justice, and Cato his toga of conscious rectitude, for the nonce. The best boys lose somewhat, and the worst boys gain somewhat, by contact with one another. Then, again, school-life seems to lead to a kind of unconscious deception—that is, the boy does not reveal himself exactly as he is,—he tones down this and he colours up that in order to win the good opinion of his neighbours. He does not *intend* to deceive; most probably he is wholly unconscious of what he is doing: he is insensibly acted upon by the *genius loci* and the spirit of companionship. No doubt this tendency may be carried to a dangerous extreme, and a boy may sink his own individuality with irreparable loss; but in general, and on the whole, it works well: it subdues aggressive and objectionable characteristics; it wakes latent sympathies, and frequently encourages shrinking and timid virtues. The school and the playground bring a boy down to his right level. "A year after the prodigy has been at academy," says Bulwer Lytton, "father and mother, uncle and aunt, plague you no more with his doings and sayings; the extraordinary infant has become a very ordinary little boy." Nowhere else are "windbags" pricked so pitilessly; nowhere else is the mask of pretence and affectation so ruthlessly stripped off. It is at school, and only at school, that there is a little truth in Mr. Hibberd's dictum that boys are all alike. They are *not* all alike, but they are much *more* alike than when each is developing his real self under the sweet home influences; and this because no boy likes to appear singular and eccentric; to avoid such an appearance he glides into the uniformity maintained by his fellows. And this we take to be the reason that the greatness of so many great men has never been suspected or anticipated

at school ; they have not shown their full individuality ; they have conformed to the pattern which they have found in vogue among their companions.

So we come back to our thesis, that if you would read the boy aright you must see him at home. You must see what he is as son and brother, what are his home studies and home recreations, what he does and what he does not do, what he affects and what he eschews, his favourite books and his cherished friends, before you can attain to a correct perception of the boy himself, and venture upon any just forecast of his future. Beneath the old familiar roof-tree he becomes once more himself, his natural tastes and inclinations are reasserted, his good and bad qualities are openly revealed ; he is under no constraint ; he is free from the controlling influence of example. O father ! watch thy boy at home, for it is at home he bares his heart to thy gaze, and shows thee what there is in him of good or evil. There only canst thou see what should be corrected, what should be encouraged ; the evil tendency that should be repressed, the noble impulse that should be cherished !

Some pleasant reminiscences of Lord Macaulay's home life in his boyhood have been preserved. At an early age his abilities claimed recognition, and the literary tastes which coloured all his after years. His mother wrote of him :—"He gets on wonderfully in all branches of his education, and the extent of his reading, and the knowledge he has derived from it, are truly astonishing in a boy not yet eight years old. He is at the same time as playful as a kitten." She proceeds to give some illustrations of his mental activity. The future historian, while yet in his childhood, conceived the idea of writing a compendium of universal history, and really contrived to give a tolerably connected view of the leading events from the creation to the beginning of the nineteenth century, filling a quire of paper. Having read Sir Walter Scott's "*Marmion*" and "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*," the latter of which he got entirely by heart, his imagination was so fired that he determined on writing a poem in six cantos which he called the "*Battle of Cheviot*." After he had finished, as he did in a couple of days, three cantos of about 120 lines each, he grew tired of it, for the thought struck him that he would compose an heroic poem, "*Olaus the Great, or the Conquest of Mona*,"

in which, after the manner of Virgil, he would introduce in prophetic song the fortunes of his family; among others, those of a General Macaulay, who, after having long suffered from the cruelty of Tippoo Saib, the tyrant of Mysore, aided in his downfall; and of his father, Mr. Zachary Macaulay, who had exerted himself for the deliverance of the wretched Africans. The boy Macaulay also wrote squibs and parodies, for he was by no means a pale and sickly bookworm, without any capacity of enjoyment. Nor was he a little frigid egotist, wrapped up in conceited admiration of his precocious genius. His parents were careful not to stimulate his self-love. They never handed about his productions or encouraged him to display his powers of conversation or memory. No word or act of theirs imprudently fostered in him a sense of his remarkable endowments. One who knew him well writes:—
“It was scarcely ever that the consciousness was expressed by either of his parents of the superiority of their son over other children. Indeed, with his father I never remember any such expression. What I most observed myself was his extraordinary command of language. When he came to describe to his mother any childish play, I took care to be present, when I could, that I might listen to the way in which he expressed himself, often scarcely exceeded in his later years. Except in this light, I remember him only as a good-tempered boy, always occupied, playing with his sisters, without assumption of any kind.” And to the end of his life he remained thus free from vanity or susceptibility, just as to the end of his life he remained eager in the pursuit of knowledge. The wonderful memory of his boyhood served him excellently in his manhood. Hence it was said of him by one of his friends that he never forgot anything; a saying which drew from Sydney Smith a beautiful compliment to his kindly, generous nature. “Never forgot anything? No; *except injuries*.” Let it be added that Macaulay, with all his great and various learning, was a happy, healthy boy. He rambled in the fields; he played with his sisters; he had a keen eye for trees and flowers; he rode on horseback; he even learned to cook! The wise system pursued at home was carried out by his father’s friend, Hannah More, on his frequent visits to her. “She would keep him with her for weeks, listening to him as he read prose by the ell, declaimed poetry by the hour, and discussed and compared

his favourite heroes, ancient, modern, and fictitious, under all points of view and in every possible combination ; coaxing him into the garden under pretence of a lecture on botany ; sending him from his books to run round the grounds or play at cooking in the kitchen ; giving him Bible-lessons which invariably ended in a theological argument, and following him with her advice and sympathy through his multifarious literary enterprises." To the happiness of Macaulay's home the boy Macaulay largely contributed.

The story of the early life of James Watt, whose name will for ever be connected with the steam-engine, is well known. His boyhood was a fitting prelude to his manhood ; it evinced the same industry, patience, and ingenuity. He made good use of the tools which he found in his father's carpenter's shop, and they led him to undertake the study of optics and astronomy. He refreshed himself by long walks into the country, and these induced him to acquire a knowledge of botany. Quiet, grave, and reserved, he was nevertheless very popular with his companions, and especially (a good sign !) with those older than himself. All industrious men—the exceptions to the rule are so few as simply to confirm its application—have been industrious in their boyhood ; and necessarily so, for industry is an acquired habit, and to make it tolerable we must accustom ourselves to it in our youthful years. Do you expect that an idle boy will develop into a diligent and persevering man ? On what grounds do you base the expectation ? He is continually adding to his burden, until he cannot, even if he would, get rid of it. Its weight will crush him. Ferguson, the astronomer, as everybody knows, began his life of patient application when a boy. The day's work done, he went out into the fields, wrapped himself in a blanket, and, lying prone on the grass, measured the distances and movements of the stars with a thread on which small beads were strung. Southey, the man of letters, began his life of patient application when a boy ; he devoted all his leisure time to the study of English and foreign literature, daily progressing in learning, daily adding to his precious stores of information, and daily inuring himself to steady and continuous work. Dr. Robertson, the historian, was only fifteen when he chose for his maxim the fine saying, *Vita sine literis mors est*. Even the great natural philosopher, began his life of patient

cation when a boy, experimenting in chemistry with self-made apparatus whenever he could secure a spare quarter of an hour. So, too, from his boyhood, Washington, the American statesman, trained himself in the ways of industry and patience. His "copy-books" and "exercise-books," still preserved, show that as early as the age of thirteen he practised copying out, with infinite care, such business documents as leases, bonds, indentures, receipts, bills of exchange.

If, then, we find the boy industrious at home—energetic in the preparation of his lessons, active in the profitable use of his leisure—we are justified in concluding that such will he be when in later life he goes forth into the world. Sudden changes of character are infrequent. We grow up with a gradual and uniform growth, like that of a plant or flower; and just as the lily is never aught else than the lily, though at one time a bulb, and at another a green stalk, and at last a pure white flower of loveliness, so the vigorous and persevering spirit remains the same in manhood as in youth, in youth as in boyhood. It has its spring, its summer, and its autumn. It passes through the stages of bud, and blossom, and fruit; but it undergoes no material alteration. We may augur well, therefore, of the boy who takes care of his minutes; who is always seen intent upon some useful pursuit; who reads when he cannot write, or draws when he cannot read; who never has occasion to say with the Roman emperor, *Perdidi diem*. There are boys who seem to think that time at home is a less valuable commodity than time at school. They do nothing when they first get up, because they are waiting for breakfast; that meal concluded, they begin to consider how they shall spend the day. This desultory consideration brings them to noon and the midday repast, after which an hour or two is occupied out of doors; then comes tea (or dinner), and with it much idle talk about nothing; in the evening it is too late to begin any serious work, and, besides, everybody knows that recreation is indispensable to health; and so the day passes into eternity with a dreary confession of nothing done.

I believe few sayings have done more harm than the old couplet about "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Dull boys, so far as my experience goes, are generally made by all play and no work. There is no fear but that the boy will get recreation enough. If he be healthy,

his natural instincts will be sure to assert themselves; and the supreme danger is that they will be under no adequate control. Miss Martineau tells us of a schoolboy of ten who lay himself down, back uppermost, with the quarto edition of Southey's "Thalaba" before him, on the first day of the Easter holidays, and turned over the leaves, notwithstanding his inconvenient position, as fast as if he were looking for something, till, in a very few hours, it was done, and he was off with it to the public library, bringing back the "Curse of Kehama." Thus he went on with all Southey's poems, and some others, through his short holidays, scarcely moving voluntarily all those days except to run to the library. "He came out of the process so changed, that none of his family could help being struck by it. The expression of his eye, the cast of his countenance, his use of words, and his very gait were changed. In ten days he had advanced years in intelligence; and I have always thought that this was the turning-point of his life. His parents wisely and kindly let him alone, aware that school would presently put an end to all excess in the new indulgence." For myself, I feel bound to say that the boy is not generally prone to an excess of this kind; he is far more likely to fall into the opposite extreme. The rock ahead is over-recreation—a new version of the old proverb, All play and no work! He requires to accustom himself, and to be accustomed, to the habit of regular study, so that his home-life may be made happy for himself and for others.

It is important to remember that as the home is so is the boy. Domestic influences materially shape and mould his character, bias his tastes, correct and regulate his tendencies. As it is said of the chameleon that he changes his hue according to the air he absorbs, so it may be said of the boy that he absorbs the home atmosphere in which he is brought up. A quiet, methodical, religious home, in which the parents are actuated by a high sense of duty, in which all the members are linked together by love's golden chain, in which a place is found for everything and everything is in its place, so that the mind is insensibly trained in habits of discipline and order, in which happiness constantly prevails, because tempers are subdued and wills controlled by the very spirit of the scene; such a home exercises an influence which

lasts until death, which we feel wherever we go, and whatever we do or bear. It abides with us to guard and encourage our better selves, to stay us when we are meditating rash and imprudent steps, to call us back when we are led into the path of temptation, to hallow our motives and sanctify our pleasures. Oh, the memory of a happy home! What finer talisman can we wish to carry with us into the battle of life? As the home is, so is the boy. If it be a home where he can turn to his father for advice and his mother for sympathy, where he finds a pure delight in the companionship of his sisters, where his character is fashioned under wise and gentle influences, then we may expect that his boyhood will be innocent and healthful, and that he will pass out of it on to the world's busy stage well fitted to play there an honourable and useful part.

Much must always depend upon the relations that exist between the boy and his parents. I have seen some boys regard their fathers with suspicion, and be ever on the watch for some fancied injury. I have seen others withhold from them their confidence, while professing to feel a true and fond affection, as if faith were not the very soul of love. I have seen others, again, preserve a pretence of respect in their presence, and afterwards compensate themselves for the temporary restraint by indulging in sarcasm and ridicule behind their backs. I have seen sons separated from their fathers by a deep and broad chasm of misunderstanding and misconception. Others I have seen parted by a constantly deepening shadow of aversion. Unhappy fathers! unhappy sons! Unhappy the father who, by his injustice, or his irritability, or his want of sympathy, erects a barrier between his son and himself. Unhappy the son who, by his reticence, secrecy, and wilfulness, closes against him his father's heart. There may be, there generally are, faults on both sides; but it is the boy's duty to forgive and forget, to remember the laws of filial duty, to close up at its first appearance any breach that threatens to come between himself and his father. It is for him to bear in mind the external circumstances that may sometimes render his father irritable or unjust; to recollect the struggle he wages daily in the wrestling-places of the world, and the fatigue it must necessarily inflict upon mind and body; to recall the responsibilities under which he

labours, the onerous daily duties that must be discharged. There is a delightful passage in the life of Charles Kingsley, describing the relations that obtained between him and his children. When he came out of his study, and met his children and guests at breakfast, he would greet them (it is said), with bright courtesy and that cheerful disengaged temper acquired by strict self-discipline, which enabled him to enter into all their interests. His eldest son, writing of him, says:—"To speak for myself—and yet I know full well I speak for all—he was the best friend, the only true friend, I ever had. At once he was the most fatherly and the most unfatherly of fathers—fatherly in that he was our intimate friend and our self-constituted adviser; unfatherly in that our feeling for him lacked that fear and restraint that make boys call their father 'the governor!' I remember him as essentially the same to all of us always: utterly unchanged and unchanging since the time that he used to draw Sunday pictures for us to the time when he treated us as men and women of the world."

This thorough confidence it is which ought to elevate and consecrate a father's intercourse with his son. On the one side, a readiness to receive; on the other, a willingness to give. Strange that the boy is so apt to delude himself into the idea that his father has some concealed and presumably selfish motive in all he says and does!—so prone to look upon him as a despot, tyrannically interfering with his high privileges and prerogatives! It is a sad thing for both when this thought first takes possession of the boy, originating generally in some hasty reproof, some unintentional injustice, which the father forgets but the son does *not*. It is the little rift within the lute that soon mars all its music. Where an active and absolute sympathy prevails, the misunderstanding does not last; but where that sympathy has not been cultivated by the father or accorded by the son, it not only induces, but tends to foster misconceptions, until father and son grow as strangers to one another.

But the true character of the boy is seen even more clearly in his relation towards his mother. If he go to her knees with all his confessions, all his little secrets, all his fancied wrongs, all his real sufferings, all his misdeeds—if he never fail in his tenderness towards her, in his deep love and

reverence;—then, whatever may be his follies or faults, I shall not despair of him. The boy who loves his mother will, by virtue of that love, be borne harmless through the fiery trials of the world, as of old the innocents walked barefooted but unwounded over the red-hot iron of the ordeal. I have always been much struck by a story which Hugh Miller relates of his early life. A daring and energetic boy, with a great love of adventure, he had penetrated on one occasion into a cave on the sea-coast of Cromarty, and, along with a companion whom he had tempted to follow him, was imprisoned for the night by the unexpected inrush of the rising tide. "The cave," he says, "proved a mine of wonders, with sides and roof crusted over by a white stone resembling marble (calcareous limestone), and a petrifying spring. . . . A shoal of porpoises were tempesting the water in their unwieldy gambols scarcely a hundred yards from the cavern's mouth, and a flock of seagulls were screaming around them, like harpies round the viands of the Trojan. To add to the interest of the place, we had learned from tradition that long ago the cave had furnished Wallace with a hiding-place, and that more recently it had been haunted by smugglers. In the midst of our engagements, however, the evening began to darken; and we discovered that our very fine cave was neither more nor less than a prison. We attempted climbing round, but in vain; for the shelf from whence we had leaped was unattainable, and there was no other path. 'What will my mother think?' said the poor little fellow whom I had brought into this predicament, as he burst into tears. 'I would care nothing for myself—but my mother!'" If boys, when tempted to do wrong, would ask themselves, like Hugh Miller's little comrade, "What will my mother think?" from how much suffering and sorrow they would rescue their souls! If, before they trespassed on forbidden ground, or allowed unholy words to pass their lips, or wandered into evil places with evil companions, they repeated, "What will my mother think?" would not the question, simple as it seems, act like a charm to protect them from danger?

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The boy, therefore, to whose manhood we should look forward with hope and confidence is the boy who loves his mother. Loves his mother? Every reader will straightway protest that *he* loves his mother; and no doubt he does, but with a narrow, a mean, and a selfish love. But the boy I have

in my mind's eye is the boy whose love is all generosity and thoughtfulness and ready obedience; the boy who shrinks from awakening in his mother a single fear or anxiety; who studies how to anticipate her wish; who confides to her all his troubles, aspirations, desires; who responds to her lightest command, and is never so happy as when rendering her some little service. The boy I mean is he who in his mother's presence subdues his voice and lays aside his rough manners; who shows her the courteous attention which the true gentleman shows ever to "the weaker sex;" who introduces her name into his every prayer, and in his heart enshrines her image, because he knows of none fairer or dearer. Of the future of such a boy I cannot permit myself to doubt. His love for his mother will be that guardian angel which the old theologians supposed to attend each one of us in our passage through this mortal life—that guardian angel which assists us in all our difficulties, soothes us in all our sorrows, and sustains us in all our temptations, so long as we do not refuse to listen to its voice, or seek the protecting shadow of its wings. But of the boy who flings at his mother the hard words he gathers up in the streets and the playground, who conceals from her his thoughts and amusements, who treats her with churlish rudeness when he has no special purpose to serve, who cares not for the tears he brings to her tender eyes, who seems to think that a hasty kiss is sufficient repayment for all her ceaseless devotion, and that an occasional phrase of affection compensates for frequent disobedience and unkindness of conduct—of him I dare not predict any good. I have no confidence in the boy who wounds his mother.

Next we may consider the boy as brother; how does he behave, for instance, to his sister? Does he seek her company, does he share her amusements, does he guard her interests? Is he gentle and polished in his language and conduct towards her? If she be younger than himself, does he act as her guide, her friend, her champion? If she be older, does he yield her due obedience and respect?—for there can be no true affection where these are wanting. What a brother may and can be to a sister we know from the examples of Charles and Mary Lamb, the poet Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke. The relation between brother and sister is one of

the sweetest that human life affords ; it is so unselfish, so pure, so noble, so chivalrous ; and it may be so used as to secure or increase the happiness of home, to reduce the friction of the wheels of the household machine, to maintain a good understanding between the elder and younger members of the family, to promote a sympathetic intercourse between those whom circumstances or accident or error have temporarily separated. In Miss Yonge's "Daisy Chain" we find an illustration to our purpose. Margaret defends her brother Richard, whom she would fain have present at the christening of the latest comer :—

"It is the first christening," said Margaret, "we ever had without our all being there."

"It was best not to press it, my dear," said her mother. "Your papa would have had his thoughts turned to the disappointment again, and it makes Richard himself so unhappy to see his vexation that I believe it is better not to renew it."

"But to miss him for so long!" said Margaret. . . . "I cannot think what he would do without you to encourage him."

"Or you, you good sister," said her mother, smiling. "If we could only teach him not to mind being laughed at, and to have some confidence in himself, he and papa would get on together."

"It is very hard," cried Margaret almost indignantly, "that papa won't believe it, when he does his best."

This is the spirit that should animate the relations between brother and sister or between brother and brother—the most entire confidence, the simplest affection. When David sorrows for the loss of his friend Jonathan, he says that he loved him *as a brother* ; such was the truth, and depth, and unselfishness of his love. A charming picture of the love that should subsist between brother and sister is drawn by Shakespeare in his play of "Twelfth Night." Olivia is represented as exploring her brother's death :—

"The element itself, till seven years hence,
Shall not behold her face at ample view ;
But, like a cloistress, she will veiled walk,
And water once a day her chamber round
With eye-offending brine ; all this to season
A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
And lasting in her sad remembrance."

In "Cymbeline" our great dramatist brings before us a couple of true brothers in Guiderius and Arviragus. In "Julius Cæsar," Brutus, when proffering the friendship of himself and Cassius to Mark Antony, exclaims:—

"For your part,
To you our swords have leaden points, Mark Antony;
Our arms no strength of malice; and our hearts,
Of brothers' tempers."

And Mark Antony himself, in "Antony and Cleopatra," when concluding an alliance with Octavius Cæsar, expresses his desire that

"From this hour
The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs."

To see an elder brother taking loving charge of his younger, watching over him with vigilant affection, always ready to assist or to defend him, guarding him against evil, encouraging him in the right, strengthening him against temptation,—can there be found on this wide earth a sight more beautiful? What brotherhood really is and means was shown by the sons of Alfred the Great, Edward and Ethelward, who differed in their tastes and talents, but were united by the bonds of an unselfish affection. Hence, we are told, they had the love of all about them, and showed affability and gentleness to all, both natives and foreigners, and were in complete subjection to their father. Nor amongst the other studies which pertain to this life and are fit for noble youths were they suffered to pass their time idly and unprofitably without learning the liberal arts; for they carefully learned the Psalms and Saxon books, especially the Saxon poems, and were continually in the habit of making use of books. They were together in their studies and in their amusements, and no cloud or shadow ever rose between them.

We sometimes hear a sister complain of her brother, that he is rough in his ways and rude in his speech. He carries into the quiet of the home circle the boisterousness of the cricket-field or the playground. We fear that some boys do not think it necessary to behave as gentlemen in their own families. They are adepts in what we have heard called "company manners," keeping their politeness for their inter-

course with their "friends" and "acquaintances." But no such politeness can be of a true kind. It must be more or less of a counterfeit. All genuine courtesy must begin, as charity is said to begin, at home; because the basis of courtesy is self-denial, the preference of others to ourselves; and unless we observe this golden law in the domestic circle we shall assuredly forget it when we go out into the world. We may put on a varnish of politeness, but keen eyes will see through it and detect the selfishness underneath. He who at home is constantly violating the rules of good-breeding will soon forget them abroad. He who thinks only of himself at home is hardly likely to think of others in society. Selfishness is a vice that rapidly grows unless it is cut down remorselessly when it first makes its appearance; and rudeness or "want of manners" is but a *form* of selfishness. Tennyson justly says:—

"Manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of noble nature and of loyal mind."

The boy who seats himself at the table before his sister, clamours for "the first help," monopolises the new book or the new box of colours, flings at all around him rude words in reply to civil questions, refuses to fetch some trifling article that his sister requires, is simply *selfish*. Said Dr. Johnson:—"Sir, a man has no more right to *say* an uncivil thing than to *act* one—no more right to say a rude thing to another than to knock him down." In fact, *some* words are worse than blows! An admirable instance of unselfishness is related of Sir William Napier:—"He was one day taking a long country walk near Freshford, when he met a little girl, about five years old, sobbing over a broken bowl; she had dropped and broken it in bringing it back from the field to which she had taken her father's dinner in it, and she said she would be beaten on her return home for having broken it, when, with a sudden gleam of hope, she innocently looked up into his face and said, 'But you can mend it, can't ee?' Sir William explained that he could not mend the bowl, but the trouble he could, by the gift of a sixpence to buy another. However, on opening his purse, it was empty of silver, and he had to make amends by promising to meet his little friend in the same spot at the same hour next day, and to bring the sixpence with him, bid-

ding her, meanwhile, tell her mother she had seen a gentleman who would bring her the money for the bowl next day. The child, entirely trusting him, went on her way comforted. On his return home, he found an invitation awaiting him to dine in Bath the following evening, to meet some one whom he specially wished to see. He hesitated for some little time, trying to calculate the possibility of giving the meeting to his little friend of the broken bowl, and of still being in time for the dinner-party in Bath; but finding this could not be, he wrote to decline accepting the invitation on the plea of a 'pre-engagement,' saying to us, 'I cannot disappoint her; she trusted me so implicitly.' Would a brother do as much as this for sister or brother? If not, he lacks not only the true spirit of love, but the true spirit of courtesy. To use a significant phrase, sometimes strangely misapplied, "he is no gentleman." For to be a gentleman is, as Thackeray says, "to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise, and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner." In other words, he is a gentleman who does unto others as he wishes that others should do unto him; who practises self-denial at home as well as abroad, and carries his courtesy and good-breeding into his dealings with his family as well as with society.

The boy, when at home, is apt to forget the courtesy that is due to his inferiors. He orders about the servants with inconsiderate imperiousness, replies to them in churlish mood, accepts their attentions without recognition. The words, "If you please," and "Thank you," are words which apparently do not occur in *his* vocabulary. People must come here and go there at his bidding. No matter what may be their occupation, they must fly at his command, and put aside all other service. This should not be. Nothing more clearly shows the true gentleman than his conduct towards those who are beneath him in social station. He remembers that they have feelings, and forbears to trample upon them. He knows that the great duty of life is "not to give pain," and that for voluntarily wounding the heart of a fellow-creature no excuse or justification can be alleged. It has been wisely said that even for their own sakes people should show kindness and regard to their dependants. "They are often better served in trifles in proportion as they are rather feared than loved; but how small

is this gain compared with the loss sustained in all the weightier affairs of life !” It is surely pleasant to do something for the happiness of those around us ; and we may do so much at such small inconvenience to ourselves ! What does a kind word cost us ? And yet what is it not worth to those who receive it ? Kind words, when they spring from a kind heart, are more precious than rubies, finer than refined gold. They are treasured up in the hearer’s memory, to be returned hereafter with interest a hundredfold. Never yet was kind word spoken or kind deed done that did not bring its reward.

With some pleasant verses of Charles Swain’s we may pass on to another subject :—

“ Be kind to each other ! The night’s coming on,
When friend and when brother perchance may be gone !
Then midst our dejection how sweet to have earned
The blest recollection of kindness returned !

“ When day has departed, and memory keeps
Her watch, broken-hearted, where all she loved sleeps,
Let falsehood assail not, nor envy disprove,
Let trifles prevail not against those you love !

“ Nor change with to-morrow, should fortune take wing,
But the deeper the sorrow the closer still cling !
Oh, be kind to each other ! The night’s coming on,
When friend and when brother perchance may be gone !”

The boy when at home “ for his holidays ” is prone to believe that he has nothing to do but amuse himself, and his idea of amusement generally involves a considerable amount of idleness, until he becomes a nuisance to himself and to everybody connected with him. He rides or boats or plays cricket all day long ; or, if it be the winter vacation, skates and plays football, or wanders about aimlessly, asking his friends to help him to some mode of recreation. It is a grave mistake thus to waste one’s holidays. Not only because they cease to become enjoyable, not only because time when so misspent drags heavily and wearisomely, but because it is so difficult to conquer on one’s return to school the negligent and desultory habits thus acquired. Each term we have the same work to do over again ; that is, we have to conquer the inclination to loiter and dawdle, and brace up our energies once more to the

pursuit of knowledge. The mind cannot stand still ; it advances or it recedes. And so it comes to pass that, after an idle vacation, we have to retrace a good deal of the ground which we have already travelled. The bow has been so long unbent that it is some time before it can be made to do its duty. It is just as if, during an interval of peace, the soldier were allowed to neglect his drill and ignore the laws of discipline. Is it not clear that, if war broke out, he would be unprepared, and that the drill and discipline would have to be renewed from the very beginning? For my part, I believe that too many holidays are now allotted to our boys. Considering that in almost every school Saturday is now regarded as a *dies non*, and made a present of to the rejoicing *discipulus*, I am strongly of opinion that the long vacations at Midsummer and Christmas are a serious and unnecessary, and therefore an unjustifiable, waste of time. Every teacher knows, and every boy knows, that during those vacations the learner loses much of what he has acquired during the previous term ; and, if he lose nothing else, he loses the invaluable habit of steady application. At all events, the evil, if it cannot be wholly got rid of, should be as much as possible diminished ; and the boy has it in his power to contribute to this result by giving up a portion of his time to regular study. Two hours, or even one hour a day, will keep him up to the mark ; will prevent him from "falling out of the race ;" and, at the same time, will heighten, by the effect of contrast, the pleasure of the hours devoted to recreation. Play is a good thing, but work is a better ; and we have too much of the former, too little of the latter. "The pleasure of relaxation," says Abercrombie, "is known to those only who have regular and interesting employment."

And boys must remember that what they attain at school forms but a small part of a gentleman's proper education. It is the home study that makes the cultivated mind. At school they simply learn—*how to learn*. The methods there acquired they must themselves apply and put into practice. They themselves must build upon the foundation laid down by their instructors. At school, for example, they can form but a very superficial and limited acquaintance with the masterpieces of English literature ; it is in their studious hours at home, in the solitude and privacy of their own chamber, that they must take possession of the wealth of thought and wit and beauty

accumulated for their behoof in the works of our great poets and prose writers. It is at home that they must *read*; and reading, as Sir Philip Sidney says, is the "gathering many knowledges." How little of history will be known to the student who satisfies himself with the information collected at school, or even in college! He may gain an idea of the general course of historical events, and some vague apprehension of the way in which the annals of nations cross, and, so to speak, overlap one another; but of the real science and philosophy of history,—of the influence of races,—of the part played by great kings, statesmen, and conquerors,—of the manner in which the finger of Providence has traced out the destiny of peoples,—of the relation between cause and effect,—he will know nothing, unless he dedicate his leisure hours at home to serious study. And those accomplishments which add so greatly to the enjoyment of life, such as painting and music, must necessarily be reserved, in the main, for home practice. It is true that the majority of boys neither learn how to draw nor how to play an instrument, but I trust that wiser notions of education are rapidly being accepted, and that the value of these arts, both morally and intellectually, will soon be more widely appreciated.

Whether at home or at school, the boy must remember that *one* great duty is always incumbent upon him—that of cultivating the faculties with which God has endowed him. He must remember that youth is the season of self-discipline, of self-culture—a season almost too brief for the work that has to be accomplished in it, that *will* be too brief unless utilised with the utmost diligence. It is deeply to be regretted that boys too often display a total want of conscientiousness, of the sense of duty, and seem unable to comprehend the responsibility that lies upon them of making a wise use of their opportunities and capabilities. I like to see boys happy; but can there be any true happiness where time is wasted and duty neglected? The object of life is study; the object of study is to turn to the best account the gifts we have received from a bountiful Providence. At home or at school we must learn the habits of patience, perseverance, assiduous application. We must have a time for everything and everything in its time; a time for work and a time for play; for even a certain amount of play is necessary if we will perform a proper

amount of work. But, then, the time for work must always come before the time for play.

The first great necessity for the boy is to acquire good habits, and the acquisition of these will best begin at home. We have spoken of certain habits which connect themselves with his domestic relations, such as the habits of respectful treatment of his parents, of gentle conduct towards his brothers and sisters, of polite behaviour towards his inferiors. We shall now dwell upon those which are essential to his own happiness and prosperity, which will fit him to bear a brave and honourable part in the battle of life, and are just those which should be formed under the genial influences of home. And as the mind is greatly dependent upon the body, we shall begin with the habits which promote bodily health and vigour.

Cultivate, then, a *habit of early rising*. A good deal of wisdom is generally wrapped up in the proverbs which have been handed down to us by our forefathers; and a good deal of wisdom is embodied in the old saw :—

“Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”

Life is not so long that we can afford to waste many hours of the day at either end of it; and the “late hours” which consume our vitality and depress our energies are as much wasted as the hours unnecessarily spent in bed. Buffon, the great naturalist, tells an amusing anecdote of himself, which may here be quoted. “In my youth,” he says, “I was very fond of sleep; it robbed me of much of my time; but my poor servant Joseph was of great service in enabling me to conquer this bad habit. I promised to give him a crown every time that he made me rise at six. Next morning he did not fail to wake me and torment me, but he received only abuse. The day after he did the same, with no better success; and I was obliged to acknowledge, at noon, that I had lost my time. I told him that he did not know how to manage his business; he ought to think of my promise, and not mind my threats. The day following this he employed force; I begged for indulgence, I bid him leave me. I stormed at him ruthlessly, but Joseph persisted. I was therefore obliged to comply; and he was rewarded every day for the abuse he underwent at the moment when I awoke, by thanks, accompanied with a

crown, which he received about one hour after. Yes, I am indebted to poor Joseph for ten or a dozen of the volumes of my works." We cannot all of us, however, pay a Joseph to "call us early," and hence some young students make use of alarum-clocks. But for myself, I don't believe that any such expedients are necessary. Where there's a will there's a way; and healthy boys who go to bed at a reasonable hour will wake reasonably early. Did you ever know a boy oversleep himself on the day fixed for an "outing" or a special jollification? He can always rise betimes *then*; and so he can always rise early if he have the wish, the will, the resolution to do it. Peter the Great of Russia, whether learning the trade of a ship-carpenter at Deptford or governing the Russian empire, always arose before daylight. Frederick the Great of Prussia never slept later than four o'clock in the morning. Dean Swift tells us that he never knew any man come to greatness and eminence "who lay in bed of a morning." And the present writer, having in his experience been acquainted with many men distinguished in art or letters, never knew one who was not an early riser. Dr. Doddridge records the observation, which, he says, he found of great help to himself, "that the difference between rising at five and at seven o'clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life." Still, I am not prepared to recommend to boys that they should rise at five. For many constitutions it would be injurious; for most I should think it far from beneficial. By early rising I mean six or half-past six in the summer, and seven in the winter; and I assume that my early riser goes to bed at ten or half-past ten, so as to secure about eight hours' sleep. When the boy becomes a youth he may do with one hour less.

He who rises early has always the day before him for the day's work; but he who rises late wastes a portion of the time still at his disposal in the vain attempt to make up for what he has lost. He goes to and fro fretting and fussing in search of the lost minutes. So Benjamin Franklin said:—"He who rises late may haste all day, and not have overtaken his business at night." The great Earl of Chatham, writing to his son, who afterwards made so great a figure in English history as William Pitt, said:—"I would have inscribed on the

curtains of your bed and the walls of your chamber, 'If you do not rise early, you can make progress in nothing.' If you do not set apart your hours of reading; if you suffer yourself, or any one else, to break in upon them, your days will slip through your hands unprofitable and frivolous, and unenjoyed by yourself." An eminent moralist was of opinion that early rising, as a means of health and happiness, should be placed next to temperance, a good conscience, a cheerful mind, and active habits. "I have hardly words," he said, "for the estimate I form of that sluggard, male or female, that has formed the habit of wasting the early prime of day in bed. Putting out of the question the positive loss of life, and that, too, of the most inspiring and beautiful part of each day, when all the voices of nature invite man from his bed; leaving out of the question that longevity has been almost invariably attended by early rising;—to me, too late hours in bed present an index to character, and an omen of the ultimate fortunes of the person who indulges in this habit. There is no mark so clear of a tendency to self-indulgence. It denotes an inert and feeble mind, infirm of purpose, and incapable of that elastic vigour of will which enables the possessor to accomplish what his reason ordains."

The "early prime of day" is the season for study. The faculties are all on the alert, refreshed by their long repose, and full of elasticity and vigour. The body, too, has recruited its energies; every nerve is new strung, every muscle reknit. We go to our work with a sense of freshness and delight which we feel at no other time. But before addressing himself to his books the boy should take a quarter of an hour's exercise. He will be amply repaid by the buoyancy of spirit with which it will inspire him. If he be a dweller in town, he will find abundant material for observation. The gradual thronging of the streets as the business of the day begins, the varied characters of the workers who are up and about early in pursuit of their honest calling, the influx of vehicles from all quarters, will not fail to interest him. And even in a city he can catch sight of God's blue skies—blue and fair indeed—before they are veiled with gathering clouds and vapour. In the country there is still more to repay the early riser for his walk abroad. The matin songs of the birds, the unfolding of bud and

blossom to the increasing light, the glitter of the dew upon the grass, the sweet odours that rise from the hawthorn hedge, or are flung abroad by the lime trees, the neighing of the young colts in their pleasant paddock—all these things are to him a source of constant pleasure, and of pleasure every day renewed. By the wayside, or in yonder copse, or down by the stream, he will find a new world open to his gaze—some such world as Miss Mitford puts before us in her description of a high bank in a rural lane. “This bank,” she says, “is most curious and lovely. Shall we try to analyse it? First, the clinging white vernal ivy, which crawls up the slope in every direction, the masterpiece of that rich mosaic; then the brown leaves and the lilac blossoms of its fragrant namesake, the ground-ivy, which grows here so profusely; then the late-lingering primrose, then the delicate wood-sorrel, then the regular pink stars of the crane’s-bill with its beautiful leaves; then the golden oxslip and cowslip, ‘cinque spotted;’ then the blue pansy and the enamelled wild hyacinth; then the bright foliage of the brier rose, which comes trailing its green wreaths amongst the flowers; then the bramble and woodbine, creeping round the foot of a pollard oak, with its brown folded leaves; then a verdant mass—the blackthorn, with its lingering blossoms, the hawthorn with its swelling buds, the bushy maple, the long stems of the hazel, and between them, hanging like a golden plume over the bank, a splendid tuft of the blossomed broom; then, towering high above all, the tall and leafy elms. And this is but a faint picture of this hedge, on the meadowy side of which sheep are bleating, and where, every here and there, a young lamb is thrusting its pretty head between the trees.”

Let the boy, then, rise early; and after his matutinal bath or sponging, and a brisk ten to twenty minutes’ walk, he will apply himself to his books with a wonderful zest and vivacity. Difficulties will vanish before him, obstacles will be readily surmounted, and problems which the night before seemed intricate as Gordian knots will offer an easy solution.

The next habit which the boy should cultivate is that of *Perseverance*. And here an anecdote may come in. Charles XII. of Sweden—he of whom Johnson wrote that he left a

name at which the world turned pale—which is hardly true ;
a name well fitted—which *is* true—

"To point a moral or adorn a tale"—

was indefatigable in carrying out to the end any plan he had once adopted. On some of his journeys, and these were of frequent occurrence, he was on his horse for twenty-four hours at a time, outstripping, you may be sure, his wearied officers. It happened, on one of those occasions, that his horse fell dead under him. Without the least concern, he marched off with saddle, bridle, and pistols upon his back. At the next inn he found in the stable a horse which pleased him, quickly harnessed him, and was about to ride away, when the owner made his appearance and naturally claimed his property. The King, however, declared he must take the horse because he was tired of carrying the saddle himself. As this explanation did not satisfy the owner, swords were drawn, and blood would have been shed, royal or plebeian, had not the guard come up and informed the owner that his sword was raised against his king. Such was the untiring perseverance with which the royal Swede worked out his designs. We would fain see our boys exhibiting the same admirable quality.

No doubt it is difficult at first. To stick to one's lessons, for instance, when the sun is shining in a cloudless summer sky, and the breath of flowers and the song of birds seem to woo us to come forth, or when the merry laughter of our school-fellows ascends from the neighbouring playground, or we can hear the pleasant babble of Kate and Nelly in the garden, is a sore trial, but we shall be the better and the wiser and the stronger for it if we *persevere*. Never give in ! Never own yourselves beaten ! Strange it is that boys who will persevere at "hare and hounds" until they are breathless with the exertion, or will bear themselves gallantly in the football *mêlée*, though bespattered with mud, and bruised, and exhausted, will confess themselves conquered by a chapter in Cæsar's *De Bello Gallico* or a sum in decimals ! I once heard a boy—let us call him Jim Nokes—say to another—let us call him Tom Styles—"Tom, I'll do your dags !" (As the expression is not my own, the reader will be pleased to pardon its inelegance.) Hearing the challenge, I drew near, unobserved, to watch the issue. Jim Nokes took a run, a flying leap, and cleared in

fine style a small ditch which ran close beside him. Tom Styles was a younger and a slighter lad, and scarcely fit to compete with his robust rival; but he too took a run and a leap—alas! to fall short, and come down souse into the muddy bottom of the ditch. He struggled out amid Jim Nokes' laughter, knitted his brow, bit his lip, clenched his fist, and, without saying a word, took the run a second time, leaped, and a second time failed. Uproarious grew Jim Nokes, till Tom turned upon him quietly, and said, in tones which spoke of determination and perseverance, "I'll do your dags if I try till night!" A third time he failed, and a fourth time. Nothing daunted, he made a fifth effort, and was successful! Not long afterwards Tom Styles was preparing a passage in Virgil's *Æneid*, Book iv., that fine passage which describes Dido's grief on discovering the departure of her Trojan hero. He was soon at sea in his construing, and, at last, pushing aside Virgil and lexicon and grammar, he began to draw figures idly on his slate. Going up to him, I whispered in his ear:—"Tom, if I were you, I'd say to your friend Virgil, 'I'll do your dags!'" The boy gave a quick glance in my face, coloured, smiled, hesitated a moment, and then took up again his "*Æneid*," which he did not abandon until he had thoroughly mastered the prescribed number of lines. Frequently, a repetition of this familiar phrase was sufficient to spur him to increased exertion, and in due time he acquired *a habit of perseverance* which stood him in good stead in his after life.

Boys who will never own that they are beaten in the playground "knuckle under" in a most humiliating manner in the classroom. Lads who would stand up in the ring until the breath was knocked out of their body are not ashamed to own themselves conquered by a theorem in Euclid or an examination paper in Latin grammar. They have not learned the lesson of perseverance. There is such a thing as proper pride, *i.e.*, the pride that will not yield to obstacles, the pride that persists in accomplishing everything that is really feasible, the pride that shrinks from the shame of defeat; and this pride is the foundation of perseverance. *Perseverando vincis.* I honour this proud and resolute spirit when I see it employed in a good cause and for a worthy object. We may note its existence in most men who have "made themselves." There

is a poet of the present day, Alexander Anderson, who is only a railway "surfaceman" or "plate-layer," yet by perseverance what has he not accomplished? Born of very poor parents, he received the merest rudiments of education, and at an early age had to earn his bread by the labour of his hands. But such was his thirst for knowledge, and such his indefatigable energy, that, while thus engaged, he has contrived to make himself thoroughly conversant with English literature, and has even succeeded in mastering the French, German, and Italian languages, in order to read the great European poets in the original. Nor has his perseverance failed him yet. Like all true students, he thinks he knows nothing while so much more remains to be known. He works for twelve and fourteen hours at a stretch, not only in the warm bright summer, but amid the frost and snow and gloom of a Scottish winter. All this time his life is in constant danger, and cannot be protected except by a cool head and a vigilant eye. His work done, he returns home to his little cottage—to rest? No; to study Petrarch, and Dante, and Béranger, and Schiller, and Goethe, and to write verses remarkable for their picturesqueness and power.

When I read such narratives as this, such narratives as those which adorn the pages of books upon self-help, I wonder that boys bred up at first-class schools, and in homes provided with every comfort—boys for whom a royal road to knowledge has been carefully constructed—who have abundant leisure, entire freedom from anxiety, and admirable tools—are not ashamed at the small extent of the work they do. I wonder that their pride does not stimulate them to attempt and achieve as much, at least, as is attempted and achieved by the sons of toil. That they should suffer a railway plate-layer to attain a knowledge of Continental literature to which their own is but as a china-orange compared to the "wide, wide world," is surely matter for regret as well as astonishment. Oh, that virtue of perseverance! That fine moral courage which, like the British soldier, does not and will not know when it is beaten! It is the salt, I say, of life; the essence of all virtue, the secret of all good. "There's no such word as *fail*!" says Richelieu, in Bulwer Lytton's drama; nor is there to those who persevere. Foiled once and twice and thrice, they succeed the fourth time, if they do but brace their

nerves to the repeated effort. When Wellington first besieged the strong fortress of Badajoz, he was repulsed by the enemy ; but he made a second attack, and though the resistance was formidable, he succeeded at last. When our soldiers invest a great fortified town, and contemplate its solid walls and frowning ramparts, they must feel as if nothing could ever shake that solid masonry ; but, bringing their guns and howitzers to bear against it, all the artillery they possess, they hammer away, night after night and day after day, until the stones crumble into the dust of ruin, and a wide breach yawns open to admit them.

AGAIN ! That is a capital word for boys to hold in remembrance. If, when you first take up your lesson, it seems all a blur or labyrinth of words, a puzzle without sense or meaning, look at it and examine it—*again*. The conjugation of that troublesome French verb you cannot commit to memory ? Try *again*. That sum in Proportion was invented to confuse and torture the youthful mind, and—you are sure of it—*cannot* be made to answer ? Go over it *again*. You have a wayward, irregular temper, and you declare it impossible to curb its sallies ? Oh, let not your heart be discouraged ! Try *again*. You are convinced that you cannot pass a whole day without giving umbrage to parent or teacher ? Try *again*. It is beyond your power, you think, to avoid answering brother, sister, or friend in the angry words that stir up strife ? Try *again*, again, and yet again.

William Jackson, the musician, was the son of a Yorkshire miller, and came of a family distinguished by their musical tastes. His father was the leading singer and bell-ringer at the parish church, and there was nothing which the boy liked better than to attend the bell-ringing on Sunday morning. During the service his attention would be attracted by the organist's manipulation of the barrel-organ, the doors of which, in order to allow free passage to the sound, were thrown open, revealing to the curious eyes of the occupants of the gallery a wonderful combination of stops and pipes, and barrels and jacks, and keyboard. At eight years of age he began to play on his father's old fife ; but as this would not sound D, his ambition was irksomely limited, until his mother made him a present of a one-keyed flute, which was followed shortly afterwards by the gift of a four-keyed flute from a gen-

tleman interested in his progress. Joining a club of village choral singers, he learned the sol-fa-ing gamut according to the old method, became a proficient in reading music, and by his abilities greatly astonished his companions. His father's ancient piano had too little music in it to satisfy him, and he longed to become the possessor of a finger-organ. About this time, a neighbouring parish clerk, who had purchased a disabled barrel-organ for a trifle, brought it over to young Jackson's house, that he might try his hand at repairing it. This he did, and with signal success. The thought struck him that he could possibly *make* a barrel-organ, and, assisted by his father, he set to work. His failures were many, his embarrassments considerable; but he persevered. An organ was constructed, which, to the wonder of all the country-side, played ten tunes, and played them correctly. The fame of this achievement brought young Jackson much employment in the way of repairing church organs, and enlarging them with new barrels, at which work he continued until he gained confidence to convert an old harpsichord into a five-stop finger-organ. Upon his new instrument he soon learned to play, "studying Callcott's 'Thorough Bass' in the evening, and working at his trade of a miller during the day, occasionally also tramping about the country as a 'cadger' with an ass and a cart." But he aimed at a higher vocation, and joining a village band, was appointed leader of it; persevered until he could play every instrument; was engaged as organist at the parish church; studied music in his leisure hours; and eventually produced an oratorio and some anthems, with glees, cantatas, and other choral pieces of very considerable merit.

Perseverance is the one great quality by which men attain success in life. In art, literature, or science; in business or commerce; in the professions or handicrafts; it is the only safeguard against failure. The most brilliant genius can accomplish no good work *without* it; *with* it the most moderate abilities may secure a satisfactory result. I have always good hopes of the boy who shows himself capable of dogged, persistent application; who sticks, leech-like, to his book, and never lets go until he has drawn out of it all its life-blood for the enrichment of his own mind. Learn a lesson from the story of Hippolyte Flandrin, the French painter. At an early

age he manifested a strong artistic tendency, and, with his brother, began to study painting at Lyons. For some years he worked under the direction of Révire, supplementing the appointed hours of study with as much private labour as he could sustain, especially the study of animals,—going daily to one of the faubourgs, where he had an opportunity of drawing the latter from the life. At home the presence of poverty was severely felt, and he and his brother strove their utmost to lighten the burden which fell upon their parents; at one time drawing little vignettes for the shops which sold cheap pictures, at another executing lithography, even designing relievos and bonbon cases for the confectioner;—anything whatsoever that would supply a handful of grist to the slowly dropping family mill.

Flandrin's great object was to reach Paris, "the paradise of imagination, where Vernets and Davids, Murillos and Raffaeles, and all the treasures of art, which as yet were to him only myths, or faintly shadowed forth by more or less imperfect engravings and lithographs, might be seen and worshipped; the world of reality, where the first living masters might be found to teach willing pupils to excel themselves." But for the journey to Paris, and for sustenance there, money was indispensable; and where was it to be procured? By persevering economy, by saving a franc now and a livre then, the funds were gradually accumulated; but the amount was so limited that Hippolyte and his brother determined to *walk* to Paris, and actually carried out their resolution. On arriving in the French capital, they hired a small room, up four pair of stairs, in a cheap quarter, and this they furnished with a bedstead, a table, two chairs, a candlestick, a waterpot, and a broom! Their manner of life, after they had taken possession of their apartment, was as follows:—"We get up at five o'clock, and go out for a whiff of fresh air in the Luxembourg, which is not far, and then at six we set to work. At eight or nine we breakfast. Unfortunately, bread was never so dear as it is now. Then we work till six in the evening. Our breakfasts cost five sous each, and we dine for fifteen sous apiece, which makes forty sous a day between us. We feed at a very clean restaurant, where we eat the simplest and plainest things we can get." Sometimes, however, the brothers could not afford a restaurant's bill of fare, and were compelled

to satisfy their hunger with three sous' worth of fried potatoes, divided between the two !

"The winter of 1829-30," says Flandrin's biographer, "was exceptionally severe ; the Seine was frozen over, and on all sides there was intense suffering, with which the efforts of active charity were unable fully to cope. Many persons died of the cold, and in the young Flandrins' garret the thermometer stood at 14° C. They could not keep water there from freezing, and the oil in their lamps froze to a block. Not unfrequently they had no resource save to go supperless to bed, and continually during that long hard winter they used to do this as early as five in the afternoon, as the only way of enduring the cold of their draughty, fireless attic. Sometimes, indeed, they were so fortunate as to have some little commission,—a sketch or a lithograph to execute for a shop, in which case the well-husbanded oil had to be melted for their little lamp, and the pleasure of work and the food it supplied kept their blood warm ; while often it involved a nice calculation as to whether they might prudently use a little of the aforesaid precious oil on anything save work, and if the decision was affirmative, the long hours spent in bed were beguiled with books, the brothers reading aloud in alternation, trying at once to forget their present discomfort, and to make up for past deficiencies in their education."

This perseverance, this heroic self-denial and patience, had its reward, Hippolyte Flandrin's name being now inscribed high upon the "glory-roll" of great French artists.

And here we have the moral of Longfellow's well-known poem—the moral which he took to his own heart as he watched the blacksmith's persistent labour at his forge :—

"Week in, week out, from morn till night
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow. . . .

"Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees its close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

“ Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought ;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought ! ”

But, as we have already hinted, the perseverance we speak of is not intended to be limited to one's studies or daily avocations ; it has a moral and a general application, and, in fact, should be the talisman by means of which we conquer all that is evil, and win to our side all that is good. Nothing in life is to be accomplished by leaps and starts ; if we seek to get rid of a bad habit, we can succeed only by perseverance. And here we have the reason why so many, when they adopt good resolutions, are baffled and discouraged : they trip in carrying them out ; stumble, perhaps, at the very threshold ; and then begin to weep, and to sigh that they are undone. But no ; they will eventually triumph *if they persevere*. A boy who for the first time puts on a pair of skates would be mad indeed if he supposed that he could at once rival his companions in ease and swiftness of movement, could glide like them over the frozen plain, and perform all the graceful devices which to them have been rendered familiar by constant practice. He will find it hard work to keep his feet. He will be glad of a friendly arm on which to lean as he staggers clumsily forward, and of a friendly hand to help him on his legs when he has measured his length on the slippery ice. Some boys are daunted at the outset by the rude character of their experiences ; they turn back, and are not again to be tempted off the solid earth. But others wisely persevere : they endure with patience and fortitude each hard cut of fortune, and their self-discipline before long is crowned with full success.

“ Perseverance ” is the one thing needful in dealing with that most unfortunate of endowments, a bad temper. I am prepared to admit that a bad temper is not always its owner's fault ; that it is sometimes his misfortune, in other words, the result of constitutional disease or accidental physical causes. But, then, its manifestations lie at his door ; he cannot get rid of the blame of these. Says Cowper—

“ Some fretful tempers wince at every touch ;
You always do too little or too much.”

This troublesome irritability, which is a nuisance to him who yields to it, as well as to those who are exposed to its effects, may be subdued, and, if not wholly eradicated, at least kept under by perseverance. You must be on your guard against the slightest symptom of its appearance, and crush it immediately. Divert your thoughts; resolutely turn away from the immediate cause of vexation; reflect on the shame and degradation of being conquered by such a thing as temper; and maintain this course of action deliberately and unswervingly. You will eventually gain a victory that will make ample amends for past suffering and vexation :—

“ And should my youth, as youth is apt, I know,
 Some harshness show,
 All vain asperities I day by day
 Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.”

Boys who give way to temper are, as a rule, boys of a narrow intellect and churlish disposition; for a large mind is the almost invariable companion of a large heart. I need not dwell on the trouble and annoyance they cause at home; on the burden they inflict upon their companions; on the evil they work out and prepare for themselves. In the playground, in the schoolroom, they equally produce trouble and secure contempt. There cannot be a more pitiful spectacle than a human being who, instead of conquering his passion, is conquered by it, and blown about hither and thither in obedience to its transitory gusts. Pitiful indeed! for we all know that it is in his power, *if he will persevere*, to subdue and bring under proper control the temper which he has foolishly allowed to get the better of him. It is true wisdom to cultivate a habit of good temper in youth, for when we sally forth into the world's stress and struggle, we shall find it an adamant shield. From heavy wounds, as well as from those pin-thrusts which, if less dangerous, are more annoying than heavy wounds, it will effectually guard us. A story is told of Abauzit, the Genevan natural philosopher, which seems an exact counterpart to that of Sir Isaac Newton and his dog Diamond. Having devoted many years of study to a close observation of the barometer, for the purpose of ascertaining the general laws

which regulated atmospheric pressure, he recorded his observations on carefully prepared sheets of manuscript. One day, however, a new servant, recently admitted into his household, made a descent upon his study during the philosopher's absence, cleaned it up, and set it in beautiful order. "What have you done," he inquired, on his return, "with the paper that was round the barometer?" "Oh, sir, it was so old and mouldy, that I threw it in the fire; but I put in its place some fresh paper, which was quite clean." "Woman," said Abauzit, calmly, after a brief struggle, "you have destroyed the result of seven-and-twenty years' labour; in future, touch nothing whatever in this room."

This admirable self-command, this equanimity and fine temper, had not been obtained, we may be sure, without many a hard struggle. It is easier, no doubt, to give the reins to one's temper, as it is to give the reins to a bolting horse; but, alas! what may not be the consequences? And observe that, as a rule, it misses its aim. Like the Australian boomerang, when thrown by an unskilled hand, it is apt to fly back and wound the person who threw it. The engineer is hoist by his own petard, the poisoner killed by the envenomed cup which he had prepared for another's lips. "The human mind," says St. Francis de Sales, "is so constructed that it resists rigour and yields to softness. A mild word quenches anger, as water quenches the rage of fire; and by benignity any soil may be rendered fruitful. Truth uttered with courtesy is heaping coals of fire on the head, or rather throwing roses in the face. How can we resist a foe whose weapons are pearls and diamonds?" But a foe who comes with black looks and hard words, all our soul is up in arms at once to resist *him*. Who likes to be tyrannised over? Or who sympathises with a person involved in toils and troubles of his own making? That bad temper of yours may be, as I have said, to some extent constitutional; but if so, why do you not keep it down? Who are you that you should harass or offend father and mother, sister and brother, to say nothing of the πολλοί? Nor is it to us much of a consolation that you yourself do not escape without a good deal of discomfort.

Therefore, I say, *Persevere!* And every night, on your knees, ask God to help you in persevering; ask Him to assist you in your struggle against the evil genius that so often

possession of you. Ask Him to give you strength to resist to the end. Under the shelter of the home-roof you have a fair field for the combat. You will have less to try you there, fewer smarts and stings than at school, or in that world of which school is a kind of type or image. Go to your father and tell him that you are conscious of your weakness, and he will advise and encourage you in your efforts to overcome it. Go to your mother with the same confession, and she will be ready to comfort you in your hour of anguish, and to soothe the feverish, restless spirit. Only, whatever you do, persevere. *Do not let your temper win.* Oh, it is such a cowardly, mean, shabby, selfish, and brutal sin! It loves—you know that I speak the truth—to vent itself upon the feeble, upon those who can make no reply, or upon those who are too generous or too proud to show any resentment. It treads right and reason under foot; it breaks through the barrier of truth; it forgets what is due to age and womanhood, or learning and virtue.

We come now to another "habit," and that is the habit of *telling the truth*. I doubt not but that you will elevate your eyebrows and shrug your shoulders at my classing truthfulness among the "habits." You will tell me it is a virtue, and a virtue implanted in every honourable nature; you will bombard me with quotations. "Truth," says Sir Philip Sidney, "is the ground of science, the centre wherein all things repose, the type of eternity." You will remind me of what Mrs. Hutchinson said of her husband:—"He never professed the thing he intended not, nor promised what he believed out of his power, nor failed in the performance of anything that was in his power to fulfil." And of Clarendon's eulogy of Lord Falkland:—"He was so severe an adorer of truth, that he could as easily have given himself leave to steal as to dissemble." And of Tennyson's noble praise of Wellington—

"Who never sold the truth to serve the hour;
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke:
Whatever record leap to light,
He never shall be shamed."

And you will hint that, somehow or other, one boy is born with an innate duty for speaking the truth, while another

boy is unfortunate enough to be gifted with an irresistible tendency to tell lies, and that it is not a "habit" at all. Now what *is* a virtue but a good habit,—a good tendency or inclination developed into action? What is a vice but a bad habit,—a bad habit wrought up to an excess? Whether boy or man will speak truth or falsehood rests wholly with himself—rests upon the *habit* acquired in early life, and his conscientious belief in its propriety and beauty. If you admire the truth, you will not fail to cultivate the habit of truthfulness. And here again I say, begin at home, where you are not so beset with temptations and trials as you will be in the outer world, and will have less difficulty, therefore, in fitting the habit closely upon you.

But, mayhap, you will think it an easy thing to be truthful; you will even turn round upon me, like Goldsmith's Englishman, with

"Pride in your port, defiance in your eye,"

and affirm that you, Charles Vernon or Frank Armstrong, as the case may be, never—never—tell lies! What, never? You retort, in the slang of the day, Hardly ever! Is it, then, so easy a thing to be truthful? Do you really avoid the slightest equivocation, the most trivial suggestion of an untruth? To all the questions put by your parents or your brothers and sisters, do you return a rigidly accurate answer? If so, thank God for it. It is a Christian and a manly thing to speak the truth in all times, places, circumstances; as Glendower says, in Shakespeare's "Henry IV.," to

"Tell truth and shame the devil!"

Every lie leaves a blot upon the soul; a deep stain, not to be washed out except with the hot tears of penitence. Every lie is a blow to one's self-respect, and thrusts one lower and lower, and deeper and deeper, until one is never able to lift one's head again; until one feels that one dare not face man—or God. Open lying or mean equivocation—the lie that strikes at you openly or the lie that sneaks behind your back—it is equally destructive, equally abhorrent, equally despicable. "There is no vice," says Lord Bacon, "that doth so cover a man with shame as to be discovered in a lie;" for, as

Montaigne puts it, "A liar would be brave towards God, while he is a coward towards man." "Sin has many tools," says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "but a lie is the handle which fits them all." Hence the devil is not only the principle of evil, but the father of lies.

You cannot tell a lie and *stop there*. You must go on to another, and yet another, until, like one of Captain Marryatt's characters, lying becomes to you a part of your very nature. He depicts in Captain Kearney an open and shameless liar, whose whole conversation is based upon lies, who is apparently unconscious of what is meant by the truth. On his deathbed, with his last gasp, he falters out:—"I once knew a man who lived twenty-four hours with the death-rattle in his throat!" Against this wicked and cowardly habit of lying let us set the manly habit of truthfulness. Who can doubt but that the latter is the better for both worlds? So, my boys, when you feel inclined to say that which is not true, whether by way of excuse or vaunt, in any trial or under any temptation, conquer the inclination at once. Cast it from you as a snare which will involve your very soul. Tell the truth—keep your word! Shun pretences and excuses, however plausible. Be not deceived; God does not love a liar. Says Chaucer:—

"Truth is the highest thing that man may keep."

A graphic sketch of a "young hero," who could not and would not tell a lie, we have met with in a popular periodical. The scene was laid on the deck of a Liverpool steamer bound for New York. On the morning of the third day out a "stow-away" was discovered "among the casks for'ard," where he had been hiding in order to obtain a free passage across the ocean: "a little bit of a lad, not ten years old—ragged as a scarecrow, but with bright, curly hair, and a bonnie little face of his own, if it hadn't been so awful thin and pale." Surrounded by the crew and passengers, who all assembled on the forecastle, he was sharply questioned by the grim first mate.

"What brought you here?"

"It was my stepfather as done it," said the child, in a feeble but steady voice. "Father's dead and mother's married again, and my new father says as how he won't have no brats about eatin' up his wages; and he stowed me away when nobody wern't lookin', and gave me some grub to keep me

goin' for a day or two till I got to sea. He says I am to go to Aunt Jane at Halifax, and here's her address." And slipping his hand into the breast of his shirt, he pulled out a dirty and crumpled scrap of paper which bore Aunt Jane's address.

The sailors at once accepted every word of his tale as true, but the first mate refused to believe it.

"Look here, my lad," said he; "that's all very fine, but it will not do *here*. Some of these men of mine are in the secret, and I mean to have it out of them. Now, point out, this minute, the man who stowed and fed you; if you don't, 'twill be the worse for you!"

The boy looked up with a bright and fearless face, and in a quiet, firm voice said:—"I've told you the truth, and have no more to say."

The mate made no reply, but, with a black frown on his countenance, turned to the men:—"Reeve a rope to the yard! Smart now!"

The men all looked at one another in surprise; but discipline *will* have its way, and they obeyed. When the rope was ready, dangling from the yardarm as from a gibbet, the mate said to the poor stowaway:—"Now, my lad, you see that rope? Well, I'll give you ten minutes to confess," and he took out his watch and held it in his hand; "and if you do not tell the truth before the time is up, I'll hang you like a dog."

A sullen growl of remonstrance passed round among the men. "Silence, there!" cried the mate; "stand by to run for'ard!" And with his own hands he put the noose round the boy's neck. The little fellow never flinched; but some of the stalwart seamen gathered around shook like leaves in the wind; and others there were who, with a stern look on their countenances, moved gradually towards the spot where the first mate was standing, evidently meaning mischief.

"Eight minutes!" shouted the mate; "if you have anything to confess, my lad, you'd best out with it, for your time's nearly up."

"I've told you the truth," answered the boy, very pale, but quite unmoved; "and I cannot tell a lie. May I say my prayers, please?"

The mate nodded; and the little fellow went down on his

knees, with the cruel rope still clinging to his neck, and putting his small hands together, he softly and earnestly repeated the prayers he had learned from his mother's lips. Then rising to his feet, and folding his hands behind him, he said to the mate, very—oh, so very quietly—"I'm ready!"

All at once the grim resolve vanished from the mate's hard face; he snatched the child up in his arms, kissed him, and wept over him; nor was there a dry eye to be seen around. "God bless you, my boy!" he cried. "You're a true Englishman, every inch of you; you would not tell a lie to save your life. Well, if your stepfather has abandoned you, henceforth you shall find in *me* a father."

And the mate kept his word.

Another habit which I would recommend you to form is that of *keeping your eyes open*. Some boys go about with their eyes half shut, or perhaps wholly shut; at least they see nothing that they ought to see, and are astonished that their companions should have seen so much more than themselves. One traveller will go from London to Edinburgh, and on his arrival in the northern capital have no tale to tell, no description to give of the country through which he passed. Another will be able to place before you graphic word-pictures of valleys and hills, smiling cornfields and green pastures, rivers and ports, and cities crowned with lofty cathedral towers. It is simply a case of "eyes" and "no eyes." If you have your eyes open you will be always learning. Each fresh scene will add something to your knowledge; in whatever company you may be placed you will acquire a fresh fact, or illustration, or argument. Lord Palmerston's varied stores of information were mainly accumulated in this way, and kings and princes owe much to the habit of conversing with the finest minds of the age. Books supply the foundation of all knowledge, but the superstructure must be raised by observation and experience. There are some of the sciences which cannot be mastered by students who do not open their eyes well—such as geology, and chemistry, and physiology. And what would become of an artist who dozed over his work, or went about it with eyelids drooping heavily? Must he not have a keen vision for the glories of sunrise and sunset, for the wonders of the silent night with its crowd of stars, for the ever-changing aspects of the heavens? And the deep green shadows of the valleys, the

broad outlines of the mountains, the ripple of the summer sea, the plunging stress of the white cataract, the rich foliage of the woodlands—must he not have an eye for those?

If you keep your eyes open, you will see something more, however, something which affects you even more closely than the world of nature. You will see the follies and sins of humanity, so that, if you will, you may learn to avoid them. You will see the better qualities and higher virtues of your friends and companions, so that, if you will, you may learn to imitate them. You will be able to detect the right from the wrong, the true from the false, the reality from the sham; to judge between bravery and recklessness, between timidity and prudence, between thoughtless generosity and honesty, between the sneak and the bully, between God and the devil. Yonder path, which looks so alluring, which shines with such a wealth of blossom: open your eyes well, and you will see that it sweeps onward into a dangerous quagmire! That new acquaintance of yours, who speaks so boldly, and is apparently so dashing and brilliant: eye him more closely, and you will see that he is a craven at heart, and that his brilliancy is the veriest tinsel. That amusement which you have promised yourself because it sounds so innocent: examine it carefully, and you will perceive that a snare and a temptation lie at the bottom of it. There are many sins which take upon themselves a gay and airy appearance, so that they seem no more than the shining threads which the spider weaves across the sunlit garden alley from rose-bower to rose-bower; but involve yourself in them, and lo! they are stout as cables, and fetter your limbs with an irresistible force. Keep your eyes open, and you will not be deceived as to their true character. Life, after all, is like that sandy tract which interposes between mainland and island on some parts of our coast; it is crossed by a safe and solid path, which is visible to the prudent and vigilant eye, but also by numerous footways, resembling it in general character, which tempt the unwary to their destruction. Boys, keep your eyes open! The Duke of Wellington—he was Arthur Wellesley then—won the battle of Assaye because he kept *his* eyes open. Between his little force and the Marathi army ran a broad and rapid river, which it was necessary to cross. But there was no bridge, and the native guides declared that there was no ford. Wellesley's quick eye, how-

ever, detected the existence of houses on both banks, and he rightly concluded "that men did not build villages on opposite sides of a stream without some means of communication between them. He ordered a careful survey to be made, and, of course, a practicable ford was found. "It is not good for little boys," says Kingsley, "to be told everything, and never to be left to use their own wits." No, nor for big boys, nor for men. And what is "using your wits" but another phrase for "keeping your eyes open"?

Some people do not shut their eyes, but they wear spectacles, which is as bad. It is true that when the eyes grow dim and old you must wear glasses, but then you get them from scientific makers, and have them properly adapted to your vision ; and I am now speaking of the spectacles which prejudiced or impractical or ignorant persons put on to save them from exercising their eyesight sharply. They take what any one gives them, set them astraddle of their nose, and then protest that they can see beautifully. A. comes with a tale about B. You are too indolent or timid to use your own eyes ; you borrow A.'s glasses, and see what A. wishes you to see. D. pounces upon you with a story about some wonderful thing or other ; at first you fail to perceive the "wonder," but D. insists upon you looking through his glasses, and immediately you fancy that you recognise it. Then, too, we have glasses of our own make—magnifying glasses, of which we avail ourselves when we examine the faults of a friend or our own supposed virtues—diminishing glasses, which reduce the dangers of an enterprise we have long desired, but never prudently meditated, to imperceptible nothings ; rose-coloured glasses, which reflect the hue of our hopes ; and jet-coloured glasses, which throw a shade as dark as our fears. Is it not strange that they who boast most of their keen eyesight most often use the glasses ? But all of us are prone to trust to their assistance, instead of looking difficulties and fears calmly in the face,—of judging men and things with an unbiassed mind,—of keeping our eyes open.

Lastly, we would advise our boys to *do in the day the day's work*. Dr. Young's famous old saw—

"Procrastination is the thief of time,"—

is too frequently forgotten. Yet what can be more clear than

that if we defer Tuesday's work to Wednesday, we shall have two days' labour to accomplish in one day's time, with the inevitable result that we shall be fatigued with over-exertion, and that the work will not be well done? "Everything in its time and a time for everything," is a motto which should be written on our memory in enduring characters. If we acted up to it, how much regret and disappointment we should be spared? Rest assured that every day has its proper work, its proper duties, which can never be so well or fitly done on any other day. Every day brings its opportunities, which, if neglected, never return. Every day brings its responsibilities, which we cannot set aside without exposing ourselves to just punishment. Every day has its temptations, which we must be on the alert to resist. Every day has its innocent pleasures, if we are wise enough to enjoy them. Every day—but let us venture on a few simple rhymes for every day, which the reader will find easy of remembrance :—

I.

There's a prayer that should be said,
And a book that should be read,
Every day !

There's a work that should be wrought,
And a battle to be fought,
Every day !

There are duties to be done,
And victories to be won,
As soars and sets the sun,
Every day !

II.

There's a cross that must be borne,
And a thorny chaplet worn,
Every day !

But God's dawn shall follow night,
And the darkness yield to light,
Every day !

If in patience we are strong,
We shall not suffer long,
But shall beat down fraud and wrong,
Every day !

III.

There's a prayer that should be said,
'Give us our daily bread,'
Every day !

While we grapple with our sin,
O Christ ! Thy work begin,
Every day !

And when the race is run,
And the battle has been won,
We shall rest . . . our duty done . . .
Every day !





CHAPTER II.

THE BOY AT SCHOOL.

"Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possess'd ;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast :
Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigour born ;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn."—GRAY. ¹

School-life the happiest period of a man's career—Its pleasant memories—Troubles of a schoolboy are as nothing compared with his enjoyments—Boys not so black as they are painted—The pleasures of study—History and geography—Latin and Greek—Some remarks about masters—The bad and the good—"Dr. Herman"—The new type and the old—"Mr. Creakle"—"Dr. Strong"—Stories about Dominies—Busby of Westminster—Sir Henry Wotton—Dr. Keate—Dr. Hawtrey—Newborough—Arnold of Rugby—Anecdotes and illustrations—An ideal schoolmaster—Mr. Hughes on the character of Arnold—The country schoolmaster, as sketched by Goldsmith and William Howitt—Different relations now existing between schoolboys and their teachers—Harry East's "school morality" no longer applicable—A school is a miniature world—How a boy should behave in it—Obedience and honour—A schoolboy's duty—Loveliness of duty—How to say one's lessons—Boys and their excuses—Waste of time—The importance of method—Relative value of study and recreation—Mistaken notions about talent—The great requisite is diligence—Samuel Drew : an anecdote and a moral—Barring-out and fagging—Bullying—Bullying as it was—Two kinds of bullies—School opinion can put down bullying.



Tis but a commonplace that the happiest period of a man's career is his school life. At what other time is he so free from care and anxious thought, from suffering and sorrow, from the burden of responsibility ? When else are his nights so undisturbed and his days so

blithe, his dreams so joyous and his hopes so radiant? In after years, when oppressed by domestic troubles, by political or professional labours, or by the hazards of commercial speculation, how regretfully he looks back to his days at Dr. Blimber's or the Sleepiton Grammar School! How, when bending over his banker's desk or his study table, pale and worn and weary, he recalls his pleasant seat by the porch door, whence he looked out upon green woods and greener fields, and that grove of elms, through which came sudden gleams of silver light as the troutful stream went on its way in sun and shadow! When his ears are deafened with the clamour of the world, how he thinks of the song of the birds that throbbed among the boughs of the old chestnut hard by his bedroom window! When he rides along the crowded street, intent on some business risk, or called to meet some sudden difficulty, how he remembers his cheerful walks, with one or two trusty friends, across the meadow and through the coppice, or to the old ruined castle far away among the lonely moors, or along the river bank until they came within hearing of the thunderous sea!

It is sometimes said that we are not conscious of our happiness until it has gone; that we do not realise the pleasures of school life until we have crossed the boundary-line that separates us from them for ever. This may possibly apply to some ill-conditioned spirits; but I am much mistaken if most boys are not keenly sensible of them even while enjoying them. You have only to spend a day at school to know that I am not exaggerating. Schoolboys, like men, have their moments of depression, of melancholy, of pain; but how swiftly these moments vanish, and how quickly the young heart thrills with a new bliss! The schoolroom has its troubles, I concede; but what are they when weighed against the superlative delights of the playground and the dormitory—the former with its football, cricket, or prisoners' base; the latter with its bolster fights, its secret suppers (though these I regard as *contra bonos mores*), its nightly yarns? An "imposition," once done, is forgotten; but who forgets a famous "scrimmage" at football, or the great victory of the "first eleven" over the town cricketers, or that astounding "hare and hounds" race, when Tom Barker did ten miles in two hours and a quarter? There are "bullies" at school, you say. True; but

so there are in the world, and with this difference, that while nobody likes or supports or encourages the school bully, the social bully has generally a crowd of admirers. Of course there can be no school without "lessons," and to some ill-regulated minds these are the *amari aliquid* which sours and spoils the schoolboy's cup; but I venture to say, strange as the statement may sound, that a good many boys positively "like" their lessons; or, perhaps, to speak more cautiously, they feel a great interest in some, and no particular disrelish for others. Does any boy worthy of the name rebel against the study of history? Does he feel no interest in tracing the fortunes of Rome, or the rise and fall of Athens, or the long succession of great events which have raised his own country to her supremacy among the nations? Does not his heart throb and his cheek flush when he reads of the three hundred heroes who held the pass at Thermopylæ, or of that brave captain of the gate,

"Who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old?"

Is he not conscious of pride and gratitude when he pores over the wondrous story of the courage of those English seamen who beat back the Invincible Armada? The warriors, statesmen, kings of former times, Hannibal and Miltiades and Julius Cæsar, Themistocles, Alexander the Great, our English Alfred, the Scottish Bruce, Marlborough and Turenne, Drake and Nelson, are these mere names which fall without meaning on his ear? Or, if we turn to geography, will you tell me it has no attraction for boys; that they find no amusement in reading of strange lands beyond the seas, of regions where for eight months in the year reigns an inflexible winter, and the bays and straits are bound in chains of ice, and the frozen snow gathers in huge hummocks and vast shining ridges; or of the tropical forest, with its profuseness of vegetable life, its great trees soaring high into the air like pyramids of verdure, its richly-plumaged birds flying from bough to bough, like flashes of colour; or of the islands of the Southern Ocean, with their crowns of palm and their reefs of coral, on which the waters break in a line of milk-white foam? Chemistry: has chemistry, with its combinations and mutations of acids and gases, no delights for boys? Are there no boy-geologists, who

rejoice in detecting the "footprints of creation" among the ancient rocks ; no boy-botanists, who find a pleasure in the study of the ferns in the leafy coppice, the plants that fringe the woodland pool, the flowers that smile and sparkle by the wayside? And even if we turn to Latin or Greek, may we not say that after a boy has mastered his "as in præsentī," or can conjugate *ῥύπτω*, he generally begins to discern a value and a beauty in classic learning? I have known boys with as keen a relish for Horace as the late James Hannay or Lord Lyttelton, boys who "spouted" the choruses of "Antigone" with as much fervour as Sandaye Mackaye in Kingsley's "Alton Locke." There is no inconsiderable nonsense talked about the dislike which boys entertain towards their studies. They cannot be expected to enjoy the preliminaries, the rough and rugged and uninteresting road at the beginning, more than men or women do ; but if they are properly taught, they soon acquire a strong interest in, and a warm liking for, their work. Of course there are ignorant and idle boys, as there are ignorant and idle men ; but these are the exceptions in a well-conducted school. It is only fair to remember that there are two ways of teaching, and that some teachers have an unfortunate facility for investing every subject they take up with the gloom of aridity. They give the boy husks for food, and then wonder that he has no appetite ; when he asks for bread they fling to him a handful of stones, and are astonished (or profess to be) that he cannot digest them.

And here let us make the profound observation that there are masters and—masters. There are the cold, unsympathising, pragmatical *pedagogoi*, who regard a boy as an animal to be fed with "shorts" and "longs," and regaled with "rules" and "paradigms ;" who take no account of his vivid young fancy and quick intellectual growth ; who do not allow for differences of temperament and character, but stretch all upon the same iron Procrustean system. There are the indolent and superficial dominies, who have taken up "teaching" for a livelihood, but hold it either in contempt or detestation, and whose daily object is to sweep through their disagreeable tasks with the utmost possible rapidity. There are the ignorant impostors, who know but little of what they pretend to teach ; and the laborious pedants, who, in accumulating details, have lost the power of expression. But there are also

the masters who are in earnest, like that Dr. Herman whom Bulwer Lytton sketches in his "Caxtons:"—"The youthful idea! he had rammed it tight! he had rammed it loose! he had rammed it with pictorial illustrations! he had rammed it with the monitorial system! he had rammed it in every conceivable way, and with every imaginable ramrod." Such a man may make mistakes; but at least he infuses into his pupils something of his own earnestness. There are the large-hearted, broad-minded masters, men with rare intellectual powers and generous sympathies; men like Dr. Arnold of Rugby or Dr. Butler of Shrewsbury, who command the love and respect and willing obedience of their pupils, and communicate to them their own love of knowledge, their own high sense of duty. Perhaps, all things considered, Dr. Arnold, as we shall shortly see, was the *ideal* schoolmaster; he so thoroughly entered into a boy's nature, knew so well how to inspire him with a love of work, could so successfully elevate his character.

The schoolmaster of this type—and, happily, it is now the prevalent type—contrasts very strangely with him of the old school, whose shibboleth was "Ut verberandus esset," whose lore was limited almost exclusively to the "dead languages," and to whom the intellectual discipline and moral training of his pupils were matters of no concern. In his "David Copperfield," Dickens sketches a couple of the *εὐγενεῖς* of a past generation, and the portraits are known to be from the life. First we are introduced to Mr. Creakle, "the sternest and most severe of masters," who "laid about him right and left every day of his life, charging in among the boys like a trooper, and slashing away unmercifully." Dickens adds:—"I should think there never can have been a man who enjoyed his profession more than Mr. Creakle did. He had a delight in cutting at the boys which was like the satisfaction of a craving appetite. I am confident that he couldn't resist a chubby boy especially; that there was a fascination in such a subject which made him restless in his mind until he had scored and marked him for the day. I was chubby myself, and ought to know. I am sure, when I think of the fellow now, my blood rises against him with the disinterested indignation I should feel if I could have known all about him without having ever been in his power; but it rises hotly because I know him to have been an incapable brute, who had no more right to be

possessed of the great trust he held than to be lord high admiral or commander-in-chief, in either of which capacities it is probable that he would have done infinitely less mischief." The other dominie, Dr. Strong, was a very different character. "He was the kindest of men, with a simple faith in him that might have touched the stone hearts of the very urns upon the wall." His school "was an excellent school; as different from Mr. Creakle's as good is from evil. It was very gravely and decorously ordered, and on a sound system, with an appeal in everything to the honour and good faith of the boys, and an avowed intention to rely on their possession of those qualities, unless they proved themselves unworthy of it, which worked wonders. We all felt that we had a part in the management of the place, and in sustaining its character and dignity."

A book might be written upon schoolmasters and their ways, and, no doubt, it would be very acceptable to readers *in pupillari statu*. But the present writer, even at the distance of more than a quarter of a century, looks up to the pedagogic office with so much reverence, that he feels he cannot become the indifferent critic of the great men who have held and illustrated it. For myself, I was exceptionally fortunate in my dominie; a man of ability and experience, with a special power of securing the respect and affection of the young, he was also a sincere Christian, who took an exalted view of the nature of his duties and responsibilities. His pupils profited not only by his teaching but by his example. I do not think he had many equals in his profession, or rather in his special branch of it, for he was the head of a private school. The masters of our great public schools are necessarily picked men. They occupy conspicuous positions; and positions of so much influence and importance that only men of proven capacity and scholastic distinction can hope to attain to them. Criticism, therefore, applies less to their talents and learning than to their character; and some of them have been men of character so marked that their reputation survives to this day. Such was Dr. Busby of Westminster. He seems to have been a good scholar, and to have known how to make his pupils good scholars; but, by the common consent of his contemporaries, he was unfortunately gifted with a severity of temper that inclined him to maintain a Draconian system of disci-

pline. The birch was his constant resource. He was always flogging. Apparently he thought a boy's memory was to be strengthened and his intelligence sharpened only by the letting of blood. He had a turbulent population to rule, it is true; but I am not sure whether the turbulence of the governed instigated the tyranny of the governor, or the tyranny of the governor induced the turbulence of the governed. I favour, however, the latter hypothesis. He was evidently without tact, without knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of boys; hence he ruled *vi et armis*—the usual resort of an incapable ruler. Strange tales are told of his inhumanity (I can call it nothing else); but they are not pleasant reading. I prefer to recall an anecdote of a more agreeable nature. It is said that on one occasion Majesty itself deigned to visit the school, but that the master persistently kept his hat on in the royal presence. When chided for his want of due respect, he answered that it would never do for him to allow his boys to think there was any greater person than himself in the world!

A more attractive type of the schoolmaster is presented by Sir Henry Wotton, the poet, of whom it is said that he was "a constant cherisher" of all those youths in whom he found either a constant diligence or a genius that prompted them to learning. He was in the habit of breeding up one or more hopeful youths, whom he carefully selected, and took into his own domestic care, and to attend him at his meals. "He would never leave the school without dropping some choice Greek or Latin apothegm or sentence, such as were worthy of a room in the memory of a growing scholar. He used specially to urge the boys not to neglect rhetoric, because Almighty God hath left mankind affections to be wrought upon." It is added that he set up in his school—and the example might be advantageously followed—the pictures of the most famous Greek and Latin historians, poets, and orators. A truly pleasant decoration for a schoolroom! I can well believe that a boy did not turn to his *Æneid* with the less zest because he could look up and contemplate the calm grave features of its illustrious author!

Another distinguished schoolmaster was Nicholas Udall of Eton, the author of "*Ralph Roister Doister*," our first English comedy. He was, however, a severe disciplinarian, in the old bad sense of one who maintained discipline by an unlimited

use of the birch. It was said of him that he was the best schoolmaster and the greatest beater of his time. Thomas Tusser, the agricultural poet, author of the "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry," was one of his pupils, and has commemorated in rhyme his experiences of Udall's tender mercies :—

"From Paul's I went, to Eton sent,
To learn straightways the Latin phrase,
Where fifty-three stripes given to me
At once I had.
For fault but small, or none at all,
It came to pass thus beat I was ;
See, Udall, see, the mercy of thee
To me, poor lad ! "

Flogging seems to have been at all times a main feature of the discipline of Eton, and the flogging block was a permanent institution. But no headmaster resorted to it with such good will and so frequently as Dr. Keate, who, in this respect, may rank with Busby of Westminster. He has had the honour to have had his portrait drawn by the author of "Eöthen," who, writing to a non-Etonian friend, says of him :—

"I think you must have some idea of him already, for wherever from utmost Canada to Bundelkund, wherever there was a whitewashed wall of an officer's room, or of any other apartment in which English gentlemen are forced to kick their heels, there likely enough (in the days of his reign) the head of Keate would be seen, scratched or drawn with those various degrees of skill which one sees in the representation of saints. Anybody without the least notion of drawing could still draw a speaking, nay scolding, likeness of Keate. If you had no pencil you could draw him well enough with a poker, or the leg of a chair, or the smoke of a candle. He was little more (if more at all) than five feet in height, and was not very great in girth, but in this space was concentrated the pluck of two battalions. He had a really noble voice, and this he could modulate with great skill, but he also had the power of quacking like an angry duck, and he almost always adopted this mode of communication in order to inspire respect ; he was a capital scholar, but his ingenuous learning had *not* softened his manners, and had permitted them to be fierce—tremendously fierce ; he had the most complete command over his temper—

I mean over his good temper—which he scarcely ever allowed to appear: you could not put him out of humour—that is, out of the *ill*-humour which he thought to be fitting for a headmaster. His red shaggy eyebrows were so prominent that he habitually used them as arms and hands, for the purpose of pointing out any object towards which he wished to direct attention; the rest of his features were equally striking in their way, and were all and all his own.”

Dr. Keate was indiscriminate in his flogging; he flogged for slight offences as for great, small boys, big boys, good boys, bad boys, until the infliction of corporal punishment ceased to be considered disgraceful. His victims were wont to assert that his very name was derived from *χρῖς*, “I shed,” *ἄρη*, “grief;” that he was an executioner who took a pleasure in administering chastisement. A boy who, one day, was wrongly accused of some trifling offence, excused himself by an *alibi*, admitting that he had been “out of bounds;” but the plea was of no good, for as he enumerated his doings in detail, Keate, at the end of every sentence, exclaimed, “Then I’ll flog you for that!” It is related that the names of a number of candidates for confirmation were once sent up to him on a piece of paper of the same size and shape as “the bill” used by the masters for reporting delinquents. Keate insisted on flogging all of them then and there, and was indignant at their attempting to evade punishment on a plea which he regarded as contemptibly fictitious! Another story is to the effect that he thus commented on the sixth Beatitude:—“‘Blessed are the pure in heart.’ Mind that: it’s your duty to be pure in heart. If you are not pure in heart, I’ll flog you.” A living bishop of the English Church, well known in youth and manhood for his amiability and blameless character, reported the last words addressed to him by Keate when he went to take leave. He had deposited his parting present on the table, and was quietly retiring, when the Doctor shouted after him:—“Now, mind you behave quietly. If I hear of your making a noise at your dame’s, I’ll have you brought back, and I’ll flog you.”

On one occasion he flogged more than eighty boys. The lower division of the fifth form, resenting the indignity of being required to answer to their names every evening in summer at eight o’clock, like the “lower boys,” resolved to try their strength against the headmaster. Accordingly, one evening

they all stayed away, unanimously pledging themselves, if summoned to the flogging-block, to refuse obedience. Dr. Keate, however, was much too ingenious and ready of resource to be foiled by such a rebellion. He waited until the insurgents were safe in bed, and then sent the tutors round to the different houses to waken them, and bring them before him in parties of two or three. Taken by surprise, the boys had no means of deciding on any common line of action; each one was ignorant of the course his friends would adopt, and resolved, therefore, as far as he was concerned, to be on the safe side. In this way Keate seized the whole mutinous band, and dealing with them one by one, administered punishment until long after midnight.

“ Then cleft the room with screeches riven,
Then rushed the boys to flogging driven,
And, louder than the winds of heaven,
Far flew the buds quite terribly.

“ Few, few shall stay where many are,
No refuge bed shall be from care,
And every cry which comes from far
Is, ‘ Oh, this hurts most wofully.’ ”

So sang E. M. Goulburn, now Dean of Norwich, in imitation of Thomas Campbell's lyric of “Hohenlinden.”

The end of the Eton flogging-block is related by Mr. Maxwell Lyte, who says :—“ On the morning of the 13th of May 1866, the day after a boat-race against Westminster, an unusually large number of boys were sent up to the library to be flogged, but lo ! block and birches had alike disappeared ! Dr. Hawtrey (who had succeeded Dr. Keate) was very indignant, and the whole truth came out before long. A trio of old Etonians, Lord Waterford, Lord Alford, and Mr. J. H. Jesse, had been giving a dinner at the Christopher to a party of boys after the boat-race, and had resolved to do something out of the way in the evening before driving back to town. They accordingly effected an entrance into the upper school by removing a panel of one of the great doors at the south end, and then made for the library, “that scene of terror and punishment, where, as if in mockery of the culprits below, have been affixed the figures of festive maidens and triumphant heroes ! The door was closed, and proved too strong to be forced from

without, but the window near it was open. Lord Waterford and Mr. Jesse got out, and, at some peril to their lives, crept along the narrow ledge over the colonnade, and so climbed in at the next window, leaving their companion to cover their retreat. Once in the library, it was a comparatively easy matter for them to open the door, to carry off the familiar instruments of torture, and to place them in the drag which was waiting for them. The block was conveyed to London, and for a time formed the official seat of the president of the "Eton Block Club," a club to which no one was eligible who had not been flogged three times at school."

The Etonian masters were not always members of the order of Flagellants. At the Revolution epoch the headmaster was a certain John Newborough, who, if we may credit the record left by Rawlinson, was the very ideal of an enlightened and erudite *παιδαγωγός*. He was of a graceful person and a comely aspect; qualifications by no means to be despised in one who has to govern boys. His dignified presence was fit to awe the numerous tribe over which he presided; grave was he in behaviour, and irreproachable in his life; very pathetic were his reproofs, and dispassionate his corrections; and, when hopes of amendment could be safely entertained, he forbore from severe remedies. He always selected for the places to which as master he had a right of appointment those youths whose industry, modesty, and good conduct rendered them remarkable; and in this was so far from being influenced by friends or parents, that he frequently conferred the place without their knowledge. Careful was he, to the greatest exactness and rigidness imaginable, of the morals of the youth committed to his charge; nor in the common school exercises did he so much favour "a light airy wit" as "good sound sense and grave reflection." In expression he was very happy, his words flowing from him just though swift, and always singularly apt. "The jejune and insipid explications of the common rank of commentators he held in the highest contempt, while he himself, with a delightful *copia verborum*, struck out something very uncommon, something surprising. Terence's *vis comica* received new graces from his mouth, and Roscius then triumphed indeed when Newborough explained. Was Livy to be read? Who ever fathomed, or rather found, his depths like him whose soul was equally noble, equally

sublime with his author? . . . Gracious and hospitable was he, and knew as gracefully how to dispose of his money as how to receive it. To the poorer lads on the foundation he was known to be very noble in supplying them with the proper books and other necessities, and that in good quantity, being rightly apprised that the quickest natural parts and the most promising genius might be cramped by the *res angusta domi*."


This reads like the panegyric of a wholesale eulogist rather than the calm judgment of an impartial critic; but it is certain that Newborough was a good scholar and an able ruler. Among his pupils were Robert Walpole, Henry St. John (afterwards the brilliant Lord Bolingbroke), and the statesman Wyndham. An anecdote is related which proves that he had a quick perception of character. Some one, in his hearing, was speaking of young St. John's early successes in the House of Commons:—"I am impatient to hear," he said, "that Robert Walpole has spoken, for I am convinced he will be a good orator."

But on the entire roll of headmasters no one—not even Butler of Shrewsbury—bears so illustrious and conspicuous a name as Arnold of Rugby, to whom I have already referred as the ideal schoolmaster. The effect of his teaching and example can be appreciated only by those who compare the present with the past—the era of the Longleys, the Moberleys, the Kynastons, Temples, Farrars, Abbotts, Husseys—with that of the Keates, Hawtreys, and Busbys. Previous to his time the initial principle of school management was that boys were the natural enemies of their masters, and, as such, to be watched, cowed, and tyrannised over. Dr. Arnold established it as the basis of all successful tuition that boys were to be treated as rational beings, in whom confidence beget confidence, and who could be most easily controlled by a formal appeal to their honour. But he went further; he made education *Christian*; he aimed at disciplining and strengthening the moral nature as well as the intellectual powers. His views are best expressed in his own words, and I ask the reader's attention to the following letter, which Arnold addressed to a gentleman on his appointment to Rugby as an undermaster:—

"The qualifications," he says, "which I deem essential to

the due performance of a master's duties here may, in brief, be expressed as the spirit of a Christian and a gentleman ; that a man should enter upon his business, not *ἐκ παρίργου*, but as a substantive and most important duty ; that he should devote himself to it as the especial branch of the ministerial calling which he has chosen to follow ; that, belonging to a great public institution, and standing in a public and conspicuous situation, he should study things ' lovely and of good report ; ' that is, that he should be public spirited, liberal, and entering heartily into the interest, honour, and general respectability and distinction of the society which he has joined ; and that he should have sufficient vigour of mind and thirst for knowledge to persist in adding to his own stores without neglecting the full improvement of those whom he is teaching. I think our masterships here offer a noble field of duty, and I would not bestow them on any one whom I thought would undertake them without entering into the spirit of our system heart and hand."

"He taught us," says Mr. Thomas Hughes (one of his most brilliant pupils), "that life is a whole, made up of actions, and thoughts, and longings, great and small, noble and ignoble ; therefore the only true wisdom for boy or man is to bring the whole life into obedience to Him whose world we live in, and who has purchased us with His blood ; and that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all in His name and to His glory ; in such teaching, faithfully, as it seems to me, following that of Paul of Tarsus, who was in the habit of meaning what he said, and who laid down this standard for every man and boy in his time. . . . We couldn't enter," he says, "into half that we heard ; we hadn't the knowledge of our own hearts, or the knowledge of one another, and little enough of the faith, hope, and love needed to that end. But we listened, as all boys in their better moods will listen (ay, and men too, for the matter of that), to a man who we felt to be, with all his heart, and soul, and strength, striving against whatever was mean and unmanly and unrighteous in our little world. It was not the cold, clear voice of one giving advice and warning from serene heights to those who were struggling and sinning below, but the warm, living voice of one who was fighting for us and by our sides, and calling on us to help him and our-



selves and one another. And so, wearily, and little by little, but surely and steadily on the whole, was brought home to the young boy, for the first time, the meaning of his life—that it was no fool's or sluggard's paradise into which he had wandered by chance, but a battlefield ordained from of old, where there are no spectators, but the youngest must take his side, and the stakes are life and death."

We have seen that at Eton the "flogging-block" was constantly in sight; it was the *alpha* and *omega* of the old system of education. At Rugby, under Dr. Arnold, it was kept in the background. Arnold ruled by attracting and influencing the good and noble feelings of those with whom he had to deal. Flogging he retained for the younger part, but only for moral offences, such as lying, drinking, and habitual drunkenness; while his aversion to inflicting it rendered it still less frequent in practice than it would have been had he acted on his own rules. His constant endeavour was to make the school govern itself by elevating its public opinion. He strove to make his pupils see the meanness and littleness of those irregularities of conduct which boys too often regard as signs of courage and resolution. He exhorted them to be brave in well-doing. But to raise their moral character was not his only object; he aimed at also raising the general standard of knowledge and application. Prizes and scholarships were founded, therefore, as incentives to study, and examinations instituted that a pupil's acquirements might be regularly gauged. He believed, as I think most persons who have had experience of boys will believe, in the general union of moral and intellectual excellence. A boy may be clever and bad, but his cleverness will suffer by his badness, just as a strong plant may grow in an unhealthy atmosphere, but will assuredly deteriorate in leaf and blossom. Once, when preaching at Rugby, he said:—"I have now had some years' experience. I have known but too many of those who in their utter folly have said in their heart, There was no God; but the sad sight—for assuredly none can be more sad—of a powerful, an earnest, and an inquiring mind seeking truth, yet not finding it—the horrible sight of good deliberately rejected and evil deliberately chosen—the grievous wreck of earthly wisdom united with spiritual folly—I believe that it has been, that it is, that it may be. Scripture speaks of it, the experience of others has

witnessed it ; but I thank God that in my own experience I have never witnessed it yet. I have still found that folly and thoughtlessness have gone to evil ; that thought and manliness have been united with faith and goodness." And his knowledge of boys led him more and more to put faith in this connection, for which divers reasons may be given. As, for instance, that ability brings a boy into sympathy with his teachers in the nature of his work, and in their delight in the works of great minds ; whereas a dull boy sympathises with the uneducated, and with those to whom animal enjoyments are the *summum bonum, summa felicitas*.

It was characteristic of Arnold that he had great faith in diligence. He was not, like some masters, always on the look-out for cleverness, and impatient with the plodder, however earnest he may be in his efforts. In the race between the hare and the tortoise, his heart was with the latter. He used to relate how, on one occasion, before he went to Rugby, he had lost patience with a pupil of this kind and spoken sharply to him ; and how the boy had looked up in his face and pleaded :—"Why do you speak angrily, sir ? Indeed I am doing the best that I can." "I never felt so much ashamed in my life," he would add ; "that look and that speech I have never forgotten." Hence arose his oft-quoted maxim :—"If there be one thing on earth which is truly admirable, it is to see God's wisdom blessing an inferiority of natural powers, where they have been honestly, truly, and zealously cultivated."

The basis of his intellectual teaching he found in the classical studies. He affirmed that the study of language seemed to him to have been given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth ; and he regarded the Greek and Latin languages as in themselves so perfect, and at the same time so free from the inseparable difficulty attending any attempt to teach boys through the medium of their own spoken language, as to be the very instruments for effecting such a work. I venture to hold that Arnold set *too* high a value on the study of Greek and Latin ; but their essential importance in any well-considered system of mental training can hardly be denied. It is to be remembered, however, that it was Arnold who first made the study of modern history, modern languages, and mathematics, a regular part of the

curriculum of English schools. In this respect his example has been of the highest benefit.

Much of Arnold's success was, of course, *personal*; that is, peculiar to himself, dependent upon his character and individual influence. And in this respect he presents a remarkable contrast to such men as Keate and Busby, who were never the friends and guides of their scholars, never moulded their minds or formed their habits, or left upon them any impression of themselves. "With very little boys," says Dean Stanley, "his manner partook of that playful kindness and tenderness which always marked his intercourse with children. . . . In those above this early age, and yet below the rank in the school which brought them into closer contact with him, the sternness of his character was the first thing that impressed them. . . . This was mingled with an involuntary, and, perhaps, an unconscious respect, inspired by the sense of the manliness and straightforwardness of his dealings, and still more by the sense of the general force of his moral character." The elder boys felt for him, we are told, a deep admiration, partaking largely of the nature of awe, and this softened into a kind of loyalty, which remained even in the closer and more affectionate sympathy of later years. When they left Rugby, they felt that they had been living in a sphere of action purer than that of the world about them; a better thought than ordinary often reminded them how he first led to it; and in reading the Scriptures or other works, they constantly traced back a line of reflection that came originally from him as from a great parent-mind.

There are many more masters now of Arnold's order than of Keate's; men who, if not altogether equal to him in his highest qualifications, are not less deserving of the respect and affection of their pupils. They feel that they have something more to do than indoctrinate boys into the mysteries of the Latin and Greek grammar, of Euclid's theorems, or of algebraic equations; that they have to teach them how to grow into honest, trustful, and cultivated English gentlemen; to set before them their duty towards God, towards their country, and towards their neighbours; to awaken the young mind to the greatness and beauty of the things around it; to lift the soul into a loftier and purer atmosphere than the everyday world affords. I fancy that to-day there are few schools in

this England of ours at which a boy may not learn, not only the ordinary matters of instruction, but something that will make him wiser and better, and assist him to lead a useful, and, therefore, a happy life. Let the reader understand that much will depend upon himself. If he covers his eyes, how shall he see? If he closes his ears, how shall he hear?

To the old order belonged the country schoolmaster, now as extinct as the New Zealand moa, whom Goldsmith has immortalised—the old-fashioned pedagogue, with small Latin and less Greek, who ranked next in the village to the parson, and taught the village boys reading and spelling and cyphering for fourpence a week :—

“ A man severe he was, and stern to view ;
I knew him well, and every truant knew.
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face ;
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew ;
'Twas certain he could write, and cypher too ;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge :
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For, even though vanquished, he could argue still ;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around ;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.”

To this sketch in verse we may add—as a pendant—a sketch in prose by William Howitt, who, describing a village schoolmaster, says :—“ If self-educated, as he generally is, he has spent the best part of his life in studying Latin, or he is deep in mathematics, or he has dived into the mysteries of astrology, has great faith in Raphael's prophetic almanac and in ‘Culpepper's Herbal.’ His literature consists of a copy of verses sent now and then to the neighbouring newspaper, or selections of mathematical problems for the learned columns of the same. Perhaps he may adventure a flight as high as one of the London magazines ; and if, perchance, his lucu-

bration should appear in the 'Gentleman's,' his pride is unbounded, and his reputation in his neighbourhood made for life. His library has been purchased at the bookstall of the next market-town, or he has taken it in at the door, in numbers, from the book-hawker. 'Rapin's History of England,' 'Josephus,' and 'Barclay's Dictionary,' in large quarto, on coarse paper, and the histories with coarse cuts, are sure to figure amongst them. He carries on a little trade in ink, pens, writing paper, and other stationery, himself. If he be married, his wife is almost sure to drive a still brisker trade in gingerbread, Darby and Joans, toffy, and lollipops. As he is famous for his penmanship, he is the great letter-writer of the neighbourhood; and many is the love-secret that is confided to his ear."

The Board schools and the general advance of education have swept away for ever this class of pedagogue. The school-master of to-day may occasionally be austere, tyrannical, unsympathetic, deficient in erudition or intelligence, and unequal to the high duties of his position, but he is always far above the standard of a Mr. Creakle or Howitt's rural instructor. Usually he is a gentleman by birth, breeding, and scholarship; and such being the case, what, we may ask, are the relations our boys should hold towards him? To some extent it is to be feared that, though the old type of dominie has died out, those school traditions still exist which originated in his cruelty and inefficiency. I remember that, in my youth, they were vigorously flourishing; that the schoolmaster was still regarded as the boy's natural opponent, whom it was lawful to resist, spoliage, overcome, or baffle by every possible means that ingenuity could suggest. I understand that this tradition is still alive; that there are still schools where the cardinal article of faith is that it is lawful and right to cheat the masters. For such a belief the old school system may have furnished a justification, or at least an excuse; but respectable schools are now administered upon principles to which it cannot apply. The ingenuity wasted on this work of "cheating the masters" was, and is, adequate to the performance of very exalted and delicate duties. On recalling some of my school experiences, I am astonished at the audacity with which it was executed. For instance, I have seen boys go up to Latin class with the most difficult words written in

microscopic characters on their thumb-nails. I have seen them face the ordeal of enumerating the signs of the zodiac with a minute list on the blade of their penknife, which they ostentatiously carried in their hand, and tremulously (as if suddenly afflicted with nervousness) fidgeted about on the desk when it came to their turn to name the grievous symbols. Such tricks were justified, as I have said, on the plea that it was a recognised state of antagonism between masters and boys, and that all was fair in love or war. The feelings with which most boys resorted to these stratagems are well explained by Harry East in "Tom Brown's School-Days."

"What one has always felt about the masters is, that it's a fair trial of skill and tact between us and them—like a match at football or a battle. We're natural enemies in school, that's the fact. We've got to learn so much Latin and Greek and do so many verses, and they've got to see that we do it. If we can slip the collar and do so much less without getting caught, that's one to us. If they can get more out of us, or catch us shirking, that's one to them. All's fair in war but lying. If I run my luck against theirs, and go into school without looking at my lessons, and don't get called up, why am I a snob or a sneak? I don't tell the master I've learnt it. He's got to find out whether I have or have not; what's he paid for? If he calls me up, and I get floored, he makes me write it out in Greek and English. Very good! he's caught me, and I don't grumble. I grant you, if I go and snivel to him, and tell him I've really tried to learn it, but found it so hard without a translation, or say I've had a toothache, or any humbug of that kind, I'm a snob. That's my school morality; and it's all clear and fair, no mistake about it. We understand it, and they understand it, and I don't know what we're to come to with any other."

Harry East's "school morality" was flimsy enough, and Tom Brown, to whom he addressed it, disposed of it easily:—"Don't you think things are altered a good deal? I don't feel as I used to the masters; they seem to me to treat one quite differently." With the old race of schoolmasters, let us hope that the old, reckless, refractory race of schoolboys has also died out. The present generation, I hope, do not need to be told that "order is Heaven's first law," in schools as in larger communities, and that order can be preserved only by

strict discipline, which is certainly as necessary for the comfort of the scholars as for the convenience of the masters. Therefore a boy's first duty at school is *obedience*. The rules and regulations instituted for the maintenance of authority must be loyally obeyed, and attempts to break or evade them should be condemned by the good sense of the boys themselves. No doubt such obedience will be hard enough sometimes, or where would be the merit of it? If it always harmonised with our will and our pleasure, it would call for no effort, and we should not feel the stronger or the better for an act of self-sacrifice or self-control. Obedience, moreover, implies respect, and, in most cases, affection; and respect and affection are surely due to those who labour assiduously and energetically to fit us to play a manly part in the battle of life.

A school is a microcosm or miniature world, and those qualities which will carry us successfully, or at least worthily, through the latter are just the qualities which will stand us in good stead in the former. The boy who passes through his school-life so that it shall not throw the shadow of a dark memory over his after-life will be truthful, industrious, self-denying, courageous. He will meet his schoolfellows with generous courtesy and trust, eager to join them in all that is right, while firm to withstand them in all that is wrong. He will scorn to deceive his masters or to connive at a deception; manly and straightforward, he will earn the respect of others by never forfeiting his own self-respect. There are certain stratagems and trickeries at school which no true gentleman—and I don't know why every boy should not be a gentleman—will condescend to favour; such as the use of "cribs," or "copying" from other boys, or inventing "excuses," or telling tales, or shamming sickness. These devices of the idle and vicious I am sure no manly, honourable boy can regard with any other feeling than that of disgust. No! if obedience be a boy's first virtue, honour is his second. When some of the Italian princes would have bribed the great captain, the Marquis of Pescara, to abandon the cause of the Spanish king, to which he was pledged by his oath, his wife, the noble Vittoria Colonna, wrote to him:—"Remember your honour, which raises you above fortune and above kings; by that only, and not by the splendour of titles, is glory to be won, that glory which it will be your pride and happiness to transmit without

stain to your posterity." It was in this fine spirit that the cavalier-poet Lovelace wrote—

" I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

Honour, the honour of a Christian gentleman, will elevate you above mean and vulgar things, and inspire you to make a right use of the high faculties with which God has endowed you.

But honour, obedience, truthfulness, perseverance, what are these, after all, but elements, or, so to speak, ingredients of *Duty*? The noblest thing that man or boy can do is his duty; and if he does this, he must needs be honourable, industrious, truthful, obedient. He will obey and respect his masters, because it is his duty. He will be gentle and good-tempered with his companions, because it is his duty. He will shun prevarication and hate lying, because it is his duty. He will ask the blessing of God in prayer, because it is his duty. He will refrain from angry words and foul language, because it is his duty. When Pompey's friends would fain have prevented him from sailing for Rome in a terrible storm, he replied :—" It is necessary for me to go, but it is not necessary for me to live." And, in like manner, if you are invited to partake of some secret pleasure, in violation of the laws of your school or the orders of your parents or master, be brave enough to say :—" It is not necessary for me to share your enjoyment, but it is necessary for me to do my duty." And do not for one moment suppose that in disobedience lies any merit of daring or pluck; there will be far more courage in doing your duty. It is *that* which will test your firmness, your real intrepidity. In boyhood or in manhood, it is duty only that can satisfy your conscience and secure for you a tranquil soul. " There is little or nothing," said Wellington, " in this life worth living for; but we can all of us go straightforward and *do our duty*." The last words that fell from the hero-lips of the victor of Trafalgar were :—" I have done my duty; I praise God for it." Sir Henry Lawrence, lying mortally wounded in the Lucknow Residency, while around him raged the shot and shell of the revolted Sepoys, dictated for his epitaph the simple words :—" Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty." It is hard enough work at first,

Duty fronts us with a face so grave and a frown so dark, that Wordsworth addresses her as the "stern daughter of the voice of God." But look again, and look steadily, and you will see an exquisite tenderness beneath the gravity and a radiant smile beneath the frown. There are some scenes in Devonshire where for hours you toil through a narrow and rugged lane, which leads up a steep ascent, with nothing to delight the eye or stimulate the fancy—all bare, and cold, and forbidding; but at last you emerge upon an open country, rich in pasture and cornfield, in copse and bower, with the blue cloudless heaven above you, and beyond the shining surface of an unruffled sea. So it is with a man's duty; rough and harsh and difficult at first, but afterwards glowing with a serene light and loveliness. It is the reverse of the book which John, the Apocalyptic seer, found so sweet in his mouth but so bitter when swallowed. It is only at the first taste of it that the draught savours of aloes! Or, to adopt Tennyson's image—

"He that walks it"—

i.e., the path of duty—

"He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outred
All voluptuous garden-roses."

Ask yourselves, ye who read this book, at all times and in all places, "Am I doing my duty?" and the reply given by your conscience will be either a warning or a satisfaction. When you prepare your lessons for the next day's classes, are you mindful of your duty? Do you make a genuine, straightforward, earnest attempt to master them thoroughly? I know that some boys waste in all kinds of petty amusements the time allowed for preparation, trusting to "luck" to get through the task without detection of their ignorance. Others resort to various kinds of dishonest stratagems, such as "cribs" or copying from their more industrious schoolfellows' efforts; but is this *doing their duty*? A boy must expect to meet with difficulties in his construing, or his verses, or essay-writing; but they are difficulties that can be conquered if he is in earnest

and will take the needful trouble. When translating a Latin or Greek author, there are no better cribs than the Dictionary and Grammar. It is quite certain that Cicero, or Virgil, or Xenophon, when he wrote such and such a passage, put a *meaning* into it; and with adequate study you will assuredly get at that meaning. Do your duty, then; stick to your task, and allow no trifling obstacle to daunt you. Remember that by *not* preparing your lessons you injure *yourselves* rather than your masters. I have heard boys say:—"Oh, I'll spite old So-and-so; I'll not get up to-morrow's construing!" Surely the very climax of illogical reasoning! They will deprive themselves of a real advantage in order to inflict an imaginary injury. A man might as wisely take the plug out of the bottom of his boat "to spite" the helmsman. But, indeed, the analogy does not go far enough; for in this later case the helmsman would be drowned, whereas in the former the master suffers not at all.

There are two ways of saying a lesson, as there are two ways of doing everything—a right way and a wrong one. You may stumble or drawl through your task coldly, lamely, and unintelligently, as if you felt no interest in it, but regarded it as a business imposed upon you by an evil destiny, or as a concession which you were good enough to make to the tyranny of custom: that is the wrong way. Or you may repeat it with vigour and earnestness, throwing your mind and heart into it, displaying a thorough acquaintance with its object and signification: that is the right way. When you retire from the classroom, ask yourself whether you have done your duty; whether you have chosen the *right way* of saying your lesson; and if not, resolve firmly and seriously in the future that it shall be so. Thus shall duty be the pole-star of your conduct.

As a rule, boys don't like to admit, when they are ignorant of their lessons, that the ignorance is their own fault. They are as fertile in excuses as ever was Scheherazade with Arabian fancies to beguile her husband. Their inventiveness is equal to that of a French dramatist. Thus they will tell you:—

That they had a bad headache.
That they had lost their book.
That they had left their book at home.
That *the* leaf was out of their book.

That they were not sure how many "lines" they had to "construe."
That it was their birthday yesterday.
That it will be their birthday to-morrow.
That they could not make out the meaning of a single sentence, though they tried "very hard."
That they asked Jem Atkins the place, and he had told them wrong.
That the lesson was too difficult for them.
That they think they had better go down again into the lower "form."
That there was such a noise they could learn nothing.
That they have naturally a very bad memory.
That they have had no time.

And so on, and so on. The last excuse is held in high estimation, though in reality it makes the matter worse; for unquestionably, if their time had been properly divided and made use of, there would have been no want of it. But boys are too apt to forget that time, after all, is a fixed quantity, with twenty-four hours to the day, and sixty minutes, and no more, to the hour. They treat it as if it were something elastic, which could be extended *ad libitum*. They waste the morning, and then endeavour to stretch out the afternoon to cover the deficiency. Alas! in this respect they resemble only too closely a great number of their elders, who in their later years are always hunting after the weeks and months lost in their early manhood! The advice we would again impress upon our boys is, methodise your time. At the beginning of the day consider what you must or should accomplish before the day closes, and allot a certain portion of time to each occupation. At 7, rise, bathe, say prayers; at 7.30, exercise; 8, breakfast; 8.30, recreation; 9-12.30, study; 12.30-2.30, exercise; 2.30, lunch; 3, recreation; 3.30-5, study; 5, dinner; 6, recreation; 7, preparation; 8.30, reading; 9.30, supper; 10.30, bed. Some such arrangement of time is absolutely necessary if work is to be properly and punctually carried through. You cannot afford to waste the minutes; they are too precious. And it is just the odd quarters of an hour, when you are considering "what you shall do next," that make all the difference. Lose only fifteen minutes a day, and in a year you have expended fruitlessly nearly four whole days! How much has been done by wise men with the odds and ends of time! Dr. Mason Good translated Lucretius while riding in his carriage in the streets of London going the rounds of his patients. Dr. Darwin composed nearly all his works in

the same way while driving about in his "sulkey" from house to house in the country, writing down his thoughts on little scraps of paper, which he carried about with him for the purpose. Hale wrote his "Contemplations" while journeying on circuit. Dr. Burney learned French and Italian while travelling on horseback from one musical pupil to another in the course of his profession. Kirke-White learned Greek while walking to and from a lawyer's office. Daguesseau, who became one of the great chancellors of France, by careful utilisation of his time, wrote a bulky and able volume in the quarters of an hour before dinner; and Madame de Genlis composed several of her charming volumes while waiting for the Princess to whom she gave her daily lessons. Elihu Burritt attributed his first success in self-improvement, not to genius, which he disclaimed, but simply to the careful employment of those invaluable fragments of time called "odd moments." While working and earning his living as a blacksmith, he mastered some eighteen ancient and modern languages and twenty-two European dialects.

Do not misunderstand me. I don't ask you to devote *all* your time to study. Body and mind require recreation, and there is no waste of time, but, on the contrary, a prudent use of it, in moderate "play." You will learn your lessons all the more quickly and all the more thoroughly for having shared in a good hearty game at football, or accomplished a brisk three or four miles' walk with your "fidus Achates." I am quite willing that you should devote a good many odd minutes to the perusal of an interesting or amusing book. But what I would warn you against is the habit of dissipating your time in "doing nothing." You may see boys "loafing" and "mooning" about the playground without any object in life, leaning against the wall or lying full-length on the grass, vigorously, though idly, engaged in *killing* time. They never, or rarely, join in the games of their companions; fight shy of the cricket and football clubs; are always tired, because always lazy. See them lounge into the classroom; you would think they had just concluded some arduous and exhausting labour. Slowly and languidly they throw themselves down into their seats; slowly and languidly they open their books and spread out their papers before them; after which exertion they rest their elbows on the desk, and their head between their hands, and stare at

vacancy until they have recovered their strength! Ah, me! how in after-life they will regret their folly in dawdling and loitering away the precious hours of boyhood! They will remember the significant motto which is sometimes to be seen engraved upon ancient sun-dials: *Percunt et imputantur*. The hours perish, and are reckoned against us. We must answer for their employment, good or ill.

But not only should boys be on their guard against waste of time; there is another very serious weakness which is apt to grow upon them. They hear so much of "talent" and "success," that they identify the two, and rightly concluding that "talent" is an exceptional qualification, come to look upon "success" as exceptional also. They say that So-and-so "gets on" because he is clever, but it is useless for *them* to try, inasmuch as they are not fortunate enough to possess such abilities. Never was there a more serious mistake. When Nicolas Poussin was asked how he had risen to such eminence among the Italian painters, he did not answer, "Because I have an original genius," but, "Because I have neglected nothing." And this, in the great majority of cases, sums up the difference between so-called "clever boys" and so-called "dull boys." The former *work*, and the latter do *not*,—often because imprudent friends or teachers have possessed their minds with a conviction that they are stupid fellows—incurably stupid—who can never hope to accomplish anything. They make no effort, because led to believe that all effort would be useless. They do not strive to master their lessons, because convinced at the beginning that the task is beyond their powers. Now the fact is, that though "intellectual power" or "genius" is a very rare endowment, everybody has sufficient capacity for the work he has to do, if he will only make an energetic use of it. I do not mean to say that some boys cannot learn more quickly than others, but I do say that *all* can learn if they choose. And, generally, they who learn quickly forget quickly. There is nothing like dogged, steadfast perseverance. The hare may get first to the goal, but the tortoise, if it persevere, will get there also. My advice to the "dull boys" is, then, Do not despair; keep close to your task; bring to bear upon it all your energies; give to it all your thought and patient attention, and rest assured that you will finally achieve it. Say to yourself, as Dean Hook said:—"Wherever

I may be, I shall, by God's blessing, do with my might what my hand findeth to do." *That* is the secret of success; do with all your might the work that has to be done. Don't trouble your head about "talent" or "genius," but apply yourself to the duty that lies before you in a hopeful, earnest, and resolute spirit. It is only the small men that talk about "intellectual powers" and "large brains;" the great men have something else to think of. They dig, and plough, and sow the seed, and don't ask anybody to praise them until the harvest waves its golden grain in the broad sunlight, all beautiful to see. "Any one man can do," said Dr. Young, "what any other man has done." This may not be altogether true, for nobody could write Shakespeare's "Hamlet" or paint Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment;" but it is certain that we can all of us do what ought to be done, if we will but persevere. I often call to mind the story told of Samuel Drew, the theological writer. In early life he earned his living by making boots and shoes, but at one time he devoted a great deal of time to village politics, with the result that the hours lost during the day he endeavoured to recover by toiling late at night. One evening he was busily hammering away at a shoe-sole by the light of a cobbler's candle, when a little boy put his mouth to the keyhole of the door and shrieked out:—"Shoemaker! shoemaker! work, work by night and run about by day!" "Had a pistol been fired off at my ear," said Drew, afterwards, "I could not have been more dismayed or confounded. I dropped my work, and said to myself, 'True, true! but you shall never have that to say of me again.' To me that cry was as the voice of God, and it has been a word in season throughout my life. I learnt from it not to leave till to-morrow the work of to-day, or to idle when I ought to be working." Acting upon these principles, Drew attained a respectable literary position, though his talents were by no means brilliant, and at school he had been stigmatised as a "dunce." And, acting upon these principles, "dull boys" will find that obstacles and difficulties disappear from the path to knowledge as they persevere in their onward march.

School-life nowadays offers every advantage to the diligent. There was a time when, as we have already hinted, it consisted almost entirely of a prolonged struggle between masters and

scholars, ending not unfrequently in the open rebellion of the latter and a "barring-out." It is exciting and even amusing to read of such "thrilling exploits" as they are described by the authors of works of fiction ; but in real life they were exciting without being amusing, and were invariably the cause of much sorrow and suffering. A "barring-out," however great the provocation, could not but involve the sad consequences which always flow from acts of insubordination. "Fagging" still exists in our public schools, and, in some form or other, in many private ; but I fancy that it retains few of its old malignant characteristics. Owing to the better organisation and stricter discipline that prevail, the "bully" has now small chance of tyrannising cruelly over the weak. Such scenes as Canon Farrar, for instance, sketches in his "Eric," are now of rare occurrence, for the oppressor knows that his cruelty will meet with swift and severe punishment. I quote one of Canon Farrar's pictures, in order that my boy-readers may judge for themselves whether they have, in their own experience, met with anything like it :—

"It was afternoon ; the boys were playing at different games in the green playground, and he was waiting for his turn at rounders. At this moment Barker lounged up, and calmly snatching off Eric's cap, shied it over Dr. Rowland's garden wall. 'There, go and fetch that.'

"'You blackguard,' said Eric, standing irresolutely for a few minutes ; and then with tears in his eyes began to climb the wall. It was not very high, but boys were peremptorily forbidden to get over it under any circumstances, and Eric broke the rule not without trepidation. However, he dropped down on one of Mrs. Rowland's flower-beds, got his cap in a hurry, and clambered back undiscovered.

"He thought this would have satisfied his tormentor for one day ; but Barker was in a mischievous mood, so he again came up to Eric, and calling out, 'Who'll have a game at football?' again snatched the cap, and gave it a kick. Eric tried to recover it, but every time he came up Barker gave it a fresh kick, and finally kicked it into a puddle.

"Eric stood still, trembling with rage, while his eyes lightened with scorn and indignation. 'You hulking, stupid, cowardly bully!'—here Barker seized him, and every word brought a tremendous blow on the head ; but, blind with

passion, Eric went on—'You despicable bully, I won't touch that cap again; you shall pick it up yourself. Duncan, Russell, here! do help me against this intolerable brute.'

"Several boys ran up, but they were all weaker than Barker, who, besides, was now in a towering fury, and kicked Eric unmercifully.

"'Leave him alone,' shouted Duncan, seizing Barker's arm; 'what a confounded bully you are—always plaguing some one.'

"'I shall do as I like; mind your own business,' growled Barker, roughly shaking himself free from Duncan's hand.

"'Barker, I'll never speak to you again from this day,' said Montagu, turning on his heel with a look of withering contempt.

"'What do I care? Puppy! you want taking down too,' was the reply, and some more kicks at Eric followed.

"'Barker, I won't stand this any longer,' said Russell, 'so look out;' and grasping Barker by the collar, he dealt him a swinging blow on the face.

"The bully stood in amazement, and dropped Eric, who fell on the turf nearly fainting and bleeding at the nose. But now Russell's turn came, and in a moment Barker, who was twice his weight, had tripped him up—when he found himself collared in an iron grasp."

Bullying of the kind here described belongs, like the Winchester "tunding" and the Westminster flagellations, to a dreary past, when brutal masters made brutal schoolboys, and the whole tone of school-life was lower than that to which the present generation is accustomed. Bullying, of course, is not extinct, and never will be so long as "human nature is human nature"—that is, so long as coarse and vulgar minds delight in the sufferings of the weak—but it assumes a less violent form. It is not less ingenious in its cruelty, perhaps, but at least it is less ferocious. Let me, however, warn my readers against indulging in it. Let them remember that no true gentleman *bullies*; no true gentleman condescends to find a pleasure in the unhappiness or suffering of others. Bullying is the refuge of the vulgar, who feel they have nothing in themselves to command respect or secure regard. When I see a big lout of a fellow pulling the ear of a little boy, twitching his hair, slyly pricking him with a pin, dropping ink on his

copybook, and the like, I am filled with sad forebodings of the bully's future. I think to myself that when he is a man he will beat his wife and swear at his servants !

"There are two orders of bullies," says a pleasant writer, "the brute and the reptile. The brute is the least (less?) odious of the two, and may indeed, by careful and judicious training, be cured of his love of torturing others, and brought to be a decent enough member, as things go, of juvenile society. He is a coarse, stupid boy, who loves the infliction of pain for its own sake, and though he would perhaps rather see a little boy suffer, does not shrink from showing that he himself can be a Spartan if occasion demands. There is, not unfrequently, the seeds of good in his admiration of hardihood, and I am not indisposed to allow him the honour and privilege of being a generous boy. But I have not a word to say in behalf of the reptile bully, whom, in the name of honest boyhood, I hereby renounce and excommunicate, beseeching him to grow up to manhood as fast as possible, and to hide his shame in some such post as that of a third-rate theatre, or where he will have a chance of discharging his black venom and cowardly nature upon the human race without anybody paying much attention to him. It is he who gives didactic moralists cause to tell boys that a bully is always a coward, which is not quite true." [Here we disagree with our author. The very essence of bullying is cowardliness, because the bully always chooses for his victim a boy weaker than himself.] "He hates pain and danger himself; he toadies boys who are not afraid of him, though he bullies those who are, and only requires to be turned upon by the weakest spirit to retreat in confusion. He delights, purely and simply, in producing misery, which is not always the purpose of your brute bully, who most likely scarcely understands what misery is, or at least how easily it can be produced. The brute bully works openly, but the reptile prefers to carry on his avocations alone, to enjoy the sweet feast of grief and terror and tears by himself—for he is greedy as well as cruel and cowardly. Oh! I remember the animal. I remember but too well how I used to shudder at the sound of his scoundrelly voice, how I used to hide myself in alarm at his approach, how I used to shrink from the suspicious offers of friendship which he from time to time made me. I remember how he used to scribble on my books and

pull my hair in school, and daily rack his ingenuity to vex me by cruel and filthy tricks."

Where bullying is rampant in a school, the fault generally lies with the boys themselves. As a rule, it takes good care to avoid the eyes of the masters, and succeeds in doing so mainly because boys do not like to tell tales. Tale-telling is neither a pleasant nor a profitable occupation; but we do not see that a just and legitimate complaint of the doings of a bully comes within this category. On the contrary, it is the interest of every boy to preserve peace, order, and happiness in the little community of which he is a member, and when he finds persons offending against these conditions, he is bound to denounce them to the supreme authority, if their punishment be neither within his province nor his power. But nowhere is public opinion more influential than in a school; and if boys would only join in the condemnation and reprobation of bullying, it would soon be put down. A bully may afford to ignore the misery of his victim, but he cannot afford to despise the goodwill of all his comrades. Let it be thoroughly well understood that bullies will be "sent to Coventry," or that their misconduct will be summarily and righteously chastised, and it is certain that they will rapidly disappear.







CHAPTER III.

THE BOY IN THE PLAYGROUND.

"Lessons are over, work is done ;
Out, out, my boys, and we'll have some fun :—
Cricket, or rounders, or prisoner's base,
'English and French,' or a 'hare-and-hound' race !
Only remember our fun must be
Tempered by gentle courtesy !"

—POETA IGNOTUS.

Boys in the playground—Their true character shows itself quickly—Friendships are there formed—Something said about prudence in the choice of a friend—The benefit, moral and intellectual, of a happy friendship—Henry Martyn—About recreation—A fallacy exploded—Boys who "play" well often "work" well—A protest against the abuse of gymnastics—In praise of cricket—Its moral excellences—Cricket-matches—The famous match between the R. Cricket Club and the men of B.—Football—Football at Rugby in the days of Tom Brown.



WHEN the boy first goes to school, he necessarily feels all the discomfort and isolation of a stranger who has penetrated into a new country, of whose habits and customs he is ignorant. He looks around him, and every face on which his glance rests seems to wear a forbidding frown. He fears to ask a question, lest he should receive an unpleasant reply ; and the questions put to himself he answers with hesitation, for he does not know that some chance word may not give bitter offence. He feels that he is undergoing a severe if not a hostile scrutiny, and he is unable to guess its probable result. So he keeps as silent as may be, and thus assumes an attitude of reserve, which, in its turn, baffles and discourages his new companions. As soon, however, as he gets out into the play-

ground, he and they begin to know each other, and it is his own fault if, in ten or fifteen minutes, he has not made almost as many acquaintances. But, as a veracious authority says:—"A great deal depends on how a fellow cuts up at first. If he's got nothing odd about him, and answers straightforward and holds his head up, he gets on." Boys are very quizzical and censorious, but they are also very sociable; and the "new fellow," if he be of the right sort, is at once admitted into the sacred circle of school traditions and customs, and before the day is over he feels as if he had known the place and its people all his life. In a week his shyness and timidity have worn off; in a month, he is as great a stickler for the "old ways" as the most conservative of the school's patriarchs. And then he finds, sooner or later, that "other half" of himself who becomes his "chum," his confident, his counsellor, his friend. There are no friendships so unselfish as school friendships, and none, I think, more beautiful. They are not based upon interest or association, but spring up spontaneously, from some instinctive conviction that each partner in the comradeship supplies the other's need. Though hastily made, they are seldom lightly broken, and their moral and intellectual influence is often profound. How can it be otherwise when Damon and Pythias live for each other—share each other's joys and sorrows, thoughts and aspirations—seem to have no separate or individual existence? In the world, however close and sincere may be Damon's friendship for Pythias, or that of Pythias for Damon, there are duties, responsibilities, labours that tend to keep them apart. Or Damon marries, or goes abroad, and though the old liking survives, the old confidential intercourse necessarily decays. But at school no partition wall can come between the two; they pursue their studies together; together they take their pleasures; they have no hopes or fears in which both do not participate.

Hence the importance of a little deliberation before a boy gives up his heart and mind to his friend's keeping. I have said that most school friendships are hastily made, but I do not mean to say that this haste is desirable. "More haste, less speed," is a maxim generally applicable in the concerns of everyday life; and experience has shown that it is sometimes true in reference to the alliances and attachments of schoolboys. On the principle, I suppose, of "like to

like," their alliances and attachments generally turn out favourably; but they do not always do so, and very often the good ones might have been replaced by something better. The boy is, therefore, advised to be sure that his new chum is worthy of his friendship; that he is brave, manly, honest, and truthful, before he takes him to his heart of hearts. Let him not be caught by a flashy exterior or a gay and fascinating manner. Let him not be won by prowess in the cricket-field or skill in the gymnasium. Let him be sure that in his faithful Achates he has found one who will help him in right doing and right thinking; one who never sullies his lips with oaths or unclean words; one who is always truthful and honourable; one who is distinguished by his true manliness, frank honesty, and moral courage. Strengthened by such a friendship, he will be able to assist in keeping up the standard of thought and action in his school, in defending and advocating whatsoever is true and pure, whatsoever is just and lovely and of good report. Between him and his friend may subsist that entire sympathy, that communion of tastes and feeling, that unflinching confidence, which illustrated and sanctified the friendship of Sir Philip Sidney and Lord Brooke, Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, Niebuhr and Frederick Perthes, Tennyson and Arthur Hallam.

The good that may spring from the friendship we are endeavouring to describe was experienced by Henry Martyn, the Indian missionary and linguist. When a boy at Truro Grammar-School, he suffered much at the hands of his school-fellows, for, being deficient in physical energy and high spirits, he shrank from their amusements, and being of an irritable temper, he showed an unwise resentment when "chaffed." One of the bigger boys, however, recognising the good in his character, conceived a strong liking for him, assumed the office of his protector, interposed to save him from persecution, and helped him in his lessons. At the age of seventeen, Martyn was entered at St. John's College, Cambridge, where, to his surprise and delight, he again met with his old Truro champion. Their friendship was renewed, and the elder student thenceforth acted as Martyn's guide, philosopher, and friend, directing him in his studies, keeping him up to his work, shaping his character, and bringing him under religious influences. But for this wise and devoted guardianship, Martyn

would never have been fitted for his duties as an Indian missionary. Who, then, can estimate the value of a true and faithful friend, a friend who will lead us in the paths of peace and pleasantness, and kindle our hearts with a live coal from the altar of Christian love?

“ And there are souls that seem to dwell
Above this earth—so rich a spell
Floats round their steps where'er they move,
Of hopes fulfilled and mutual love.
Such, if on high their hopes are set,
Nor in the stream the source forget ;
If, prompt to quit the bliss they know,
Following the Lamb where'er He go,
By purest pleasures unbeguiled
To idolise a wife or child,
Such wedded souls our God shall own
For faultless virgin round His throne.”

But this is a subject on which I must speak more fully, and therefore I shall devote a chapter to boys and their friends.

In considering the boy in the playground, we are naturally led to discuss the subject of recreation. We have already indicated our opinion that play is as needful to the mental and bodily health as work ; only it should, of course, be play in moderation. With many boys, amusement occupies the first place and study the second ; which might be a reasonable arrangement if it could be extended into our later lives. One of the superstitions connected with this topic is that a good cricketer cannot be a good scholar ; that if you can construe “The Frogs” you can't play a good game at football. This is just the kind of fallacy that people repeat, one after another, for want of a little examination. The truth is, that many of the qualities essential to success in the cricket-field are the very qualities without which nothing can be achieved in the classroom—perseverance, steadiness, clearness of judgment, quick apprehension of difficulties. I have known some eminent scholars who have won high distinction as captains of the first eleven and as stroke-oars in the winning boat. The present Bishop of St. Andrews, for instance, a man of high repute for elegant and accurate scholarship, was one of the best oars of his day at Oxford. A very successful gentleman-cricketer, not much inferior to W. G. Grace himself, is classical master in a large public school, But then these were

men who did one thing at a time, and did it well ; who in the classroom threw all their soul into the mastery of the perplexing algebraic problem or the difficult passage in *Æschylus*, and in the playground devoted all their energies to bowling or stumping out the opposite eleven. The kind of thing that succeeds neither in the world nor at school is the "play" that is taken up like "work," and the "work" that is performed as if it were "play."

Unquestionably some boys have a greater aptitude than others for athletic sports and out-of-door games, and more easily attain a supreme degree of excellence in them. And if a boy plays cricket, I like him to play it well. But if it come to a choice between capital cricketing and capital construing, by all means let the former go to the wall. Remember that it can never be more than a pastime, and that if it aid you in acquiring strength of muscle and soundness of limb, it serves its only purpose. Play as well as you can ; but don't make an object of it ; don't let it encroach, even for five minutes, on your hours of work. It is well to remember that if moderate recreation be a gain to body and mind, an excess of recreation is a serious evil. It exhausts our reserve fund of energy and vigour ; so that if we are suddenly called upon for a great effort, we find ourselves incapable of it. Moreover, when weary with the play which we have imprudently converted into hard work, we are unable to resume our studies with fresh interest and renewed vivacity. The mind is so intimately connected with the body through the agency of the nervous system, that aching limbs are generally accompanied by a weary brain. Exhausted nature avenges itself, and the would-be student nods over his books. Caution is specially needed in the resort to gymnastic exercises as a means of recreation. Most of these entail a violence of effort and a prolonged exertion which I cannot but regard as injurious to "growing boys." I am old-fashioned enough to prefer, as safer, healthier, and infinitely richer in hearty enjoyment, the old-fashioned amusements. I have observed, too, that "gymnastics" lead, by some indirect process, to "betting," and that they stimulate a spirit of selfish emulation. What seems to me peculiarly objectionable is the public display known as "athletic games," in which some of our large schools now indulge. I cannot regard it as prudent to collect hundreds of

idle spectators and offer numerous prizes as an encouragement to boys—whose energies might be more profitably employed—in running, dressed, or undressed, like professional "athletes," a "hundred yards' race," or in "jumping over hurdles," or in "flinging the hammer." And I think it will be found that in schools where these demoralising exhibitions obtain, the *average* standard of scholarship is low, though they may get up or maintain a reputation by forcing a few clever boys through the competitive examinations instituted by the Government or the Universities.

Cricket seems to me the English schoolboy's game *par excellence*. It so far depends upon "science" as to necessitate regular practice on the part of its patrons, yet there is enough of "chance" in it to keep up a healthy degree of excitement. It is a *levelling* game: in the cricket-field you stand upon your skill and prowess, and your social position will not secure you a single suffrage. It is an essentially *fair* game, for proficiency in it is not a question of thews and muscles, and every player is judged by his own individual merits. As the author of "Tom Brown's School-Days" says:—"It's more than a game; it's an institution—the birthright of British boys, old and young, as *habeas corpus* and trial by jury are of British men." He remarks on the value of the discipline and self-reliance which it teaches; for in playing cricket the eleven must obey their captain implicitly, while each boy at the wicket or at his post in the field must trust to his own keenness of eye, coolness of nerve, and readiness of hand. Then it is an *unselfish* game. "It merges the individual in the eleven: he doesn't play that *he* may win, but that his *side* may. And for this reason both cricket and football are much better games than fives, or hare-and-hounds, or any other where the object is to come in first or to win for oneself, and not that one's side may win." It is a *generous* game; for the winners do not refuse their meed of praise to the losers if they have played a plucky innings, and the losers are seldom chary of their applause to the winners. Every good "hit" elicits a cheer, and both sides break out into congratulations at a skilful "catch." It is an *intellectual* game; for the victory is not to the strong, but to the cool, the wary, and the self-possessed. On the part of the captain it demands much discrimination of character, promptitude of decision, and readi-

ness of resource. The wicket-keeper's post, as everybody knows, is one of no little difficulty, and he who fills it must have a quick eye and a cunning hand. Then what high qualities are necessary to the successful bowler or batsman ! What firmness of will, what calmness of mind, what moral courage ! I think I have said enough to show that cricket is *the* game of games, and, morally, intellectually, and physically, superior to all kinds of gymnastics. It is cricket that has made Englishmen what they are, that has fitted and trained them for the acquisition and the administration of the vast empire over which waves the old historic banner of the Red Cross.

Any unprejudiced mind who has watched a cricket-match, whether in the school playground or on the village-green, will admit the truth of the preceding remarks. But we shall clinch our argument by quoting Miss Mitford's animated description of a grand trial of skill between two rival cricket-clubs, in which, it will be seen, were displayed all the extraordinary merits we have claimed as peculiar to cricket. After carefully perusing it, the most languid and lukewarm reader will kindle up into a right spirit of appreciation.

The men of B. had challenged the R. Cricket-Club, a recent institution, and its captain, William Grey, took up the glove in a style of manly courtesy that would have done honour to a knight in the days of chivalry. "We are not professed players," he said, "being little better than schoolboys, and scarcely older; but since they have done us the honour to challenge us, we will try our strength. It would be no discredit to be beaten by such a field." Having accepted the wager of battle, he began forthwith to collect his forces. He himself was one of the finest youths that one could see—tall, active, slender, and yet strong, with a piercing eye full of sagacity, and a smile full of good humour. He remembered that Samuel Long, a bowler *comme il y en a peu*, the very man who had knocked down nine wickets, had beaten and bowled out the men of R. at a fatal return match some years before at S., had luckily, in a remove of a quarter of a mile last Lady-Day, passed the boundaries of his old parish, and actually belonged to us. Here was a stroke of good fortune ! Our captain applied to him immediately, and he agreed at a word. Samuel Long was a middle-aged man, looking rather old amongst the young lads, and whose thickness and breadth gave no token of remarkable activity; but

he *was* very active, and so steady a player—so safe! The match was half gained when he was secured. He was a man of substance, too, in every way—owned one cow, two donkeys, six pigs, and geese and ducks beyond count—dressed like a farmer, and owed no man a shilling, and all this from pure industry, sheer day-labour. “Note,” says Miss Mitford, “that your good cricketer is commonly the most industrious man in the parish; the habits that make him such are precisely those which make a good workman—steadiness, sobriety, and activity.” And so it will often be found in a school that the best cricketers are the quietest, best-behaved, and most energetic scholars. The youths of R. had another piece of good luck. “James Brown, a journeyman blacksmith, and a native who, being of a rambling disposition, had roamed from place to place for half-a-dozen years, had just returned to settle with his brother at another corner of our village, bringing with him a prodigious reputation in cricket and in gallantry. To him also went the indefatigable William Grey, and he also consented to play.”

Having thus secured two powerful auxiliaries, the captain began to reckon and select the regular native forces. Thus ran his list:—

William Grey, 1.

Samuel Long, 2.

James Brown, 3.

George and John Simmons, one capital, the other so-so—an uncertain hitter but a good fieldsman, 4, 5.

Joel Brent, excellent, 6.

Ben Appleton—here was a little pause. Ben’s abilities at cricket were not completely ascertained; but there he was, so good a fellow, so full of fun and waggyery—no doing without Ben. So he figured in the list, 7.

George Harris—a short halt here too. Slowish—slow but sure. I think the proverb brought him in, 8.

Tom Coper—oh! beyond the world, Tom Coper!—the red headed gardening lad, whose left-handed strokes send *her*—(a cricket-ball, like that other moving thing, a ship, is always of the feminine gender)—send her spinning a mile, 9.

Harry Willis, another blacksmith, 10.

Thus, with infinite care and caution, William Grey had made up ten of his eleven. Said we not rightly that a captain needed

much discrimination of character? The choice of the eleventh was not easily settled, and, in fact, the post remained vacant until the eve of the match, when a little boy of fifteen, David Willis, brother to the aforesaid Harry, admitted by accident to the last practice, saw eight of the players out, and was voted in by acclamation.

At length the eventful day arrived, and with it, unfortunately, a series of deluging showers. On counting his forces, the captain found that James Brown was absent, and it became necessary to select a substitute. A certain tall fellow, John Strong, a thread paper, six feet high, was chosen; and then the little army, attended by an admiring crowd, repaired to R. common, the appointed battlefield. There the enemy were assembled; and as soon as the usual preliminaries had been settled, the match began.

"*They* began the warfare—those boastful men of B. And what think you, gentle reader, was the amount of their innings? These challengers—the famous eleven—how many did they get? Think! imagine! guess? You cannot? Well, they got twenty-two, or rather they got twenty; for two of theirs were short catches, and would never have been allowed, only that, seeing what they were made of, we and our umpires were not particular. They should have had twenty more if they had chosen to claim them. Oh, how well we fielded, and how well we bowled! Our good play had quite as much to do with their miserable failure as their bad. Samuel Long is a slow bowler, George Simmons a fast one, and the change from Long's bobbing to Simmons' fast balls posed them completely. Poor simpletons! they were always wrong, expecting the slow for the quick, and the quick for the slow. Well, we went in. And what were our innings? Guess again!—guess. A hundred and sixty-nine! In spite of soaking showers and wretched ground, where the ball would not run a yard, we headed them by a hundred and forty-seven; and then they gave in, as well they might. William Grey pressed them much to try another innings. 'There was so much chance,' as he courteously observed, 'in cricket, that, advantageous as our position seemed, we might very possibly be overtaken. The B. men had better try.' But they were beaten sulky, and would not move—to my great disappointment (says Miss Mitford); I wanted to prolong the pleasure of success. What a glorious

sensation it is to be for five hours together winning—winning, winning!—always feeling what a whist-player feels when he takes up four honours, seven trumps! Who would think that a little piece of leather and two pieces of wood had such a delightful and delighting power?

“The only drawback on my enjoyment was the failure of the pretty boy, David Willis, who, injudiciously put in first, and playing for the first time in a match amongst men and strangers, who talked to him and stared at him, was seized with such a fit of shamefaced shyness, that he could scarcely hold his bat, and was bowled out without a stroke, from actual nervousness. ‘He will come off that,’ Tom Coper says. I am afraid he will. I wonder whether Tom had ever any modesty to lose. Our other modest lad, John Strong, did very well; his length told in fielding, and he got good fame. Joel Brent got into a scrape and out of it again. He ran out his mate, Samuel Long, who, I do believe, but for the excess of Joel’s eagerness, would have staid in till this time, by which exploit he got into sad disgrace; and then he himself got thirty-seven runs, which redeemed his reputation. William Grey made a hit which actually lost the cricket-ball. We think she lodged in a hedge about a quarter of a mile off, but nobody could find her. And George Simmons had nearly lost his shoe, which he tossed away in a passion for having been caught out owing to the ball glancing against it. These, together with a very complete somerset of Ben Appleton, our long-stop, who floundered about in the mud, making faces and attitudes as laughable as Grimaldi, none could tell whether by accident or design, were the chief incidents of the scene of action. Amongst the spectators nothing remarkable occurred beyond the general calamity of two or three drenchings, except that a form, placed by the side of a hedge, under a very insufficient shelter, was knocked into the ditch in a sudden rush of the cricketers to escape a pelting shower, by which means all parties shared the fate of Ben Appleton, some on land and some by water; and that, amidst the scramble, a saucy gipsy of a girl contrived to steal from the knee of the demure and well-apparellled Samuel Long a smart handkerchief, which his careful dame had tied around it to preserve his new (what is the mincing feminine word?)—his new inexpressibles; thus reversing the story of Desdemona, and causing the new

Othello to call aloud for his handkerchief, to the great diversion of the company. And so we parted ; the players retired to their supper, and we to our homes ; all wet through, all good-humoured, and all happy—except the losers.

“To-day we are happy too. Hats, with ribands in them, go glancing up and down, and William Grey says, with a proud humility, ‘We do not challenge any parish, but if we be challenged we are ready.’”

No doubt the reader belongs to a club, an eleven, victorious and invincible, whose captain is prepared to say as much.

Football does not seem to us so enjoyable a game as cricket, nor is it so fair and generous, but perhaps it is more exciting. In truth, the passions of the players are sometimes influenced to excess by the strain and stress of “rush” and “scrimmage,” and therefore it is a game in which none should join who do not possess a considerable command over their temper. And I, for one, am altogether opposed to the shinning and outrageous physical violence which it occasionally involves. I regard them as by no means necessary and as far from funny. A game in which the weaker goes to the wall, it is altogether unsuitable for delicate boys, who may suffer seriously by engaging in it ; but for the strong and bold and ready it is a capital pastime, testing their nerves and proving their muscles. Such boys may be trusted to play it fairly and good-humouredly, and not to import into it the savage vehemence of a Malay or a Red Indian. A first-rate description of a football match occurs in “Tom Brown’s School-Days,” with which most of my readers will be familiar. For the benefit of those, however, who have never pored in delight over the Homeric narrative, I quote a passage or two :—

“Look, there is a slight move forward of the Schoolhouse wings ; a shout of ‘Are you ready?’ and loud affirmative reply. Old Brooke takes half-a-dozen quick steps, and away goes the ball spinning towards the School goal, seventy yards before it touches ground, and at no point above twelve or fifteen feet high—a model kick-off—and the Schoolhouse cheer and rush on ; the ball is returned, and they meet it and drive it back amongst the masses of the School, already in motion. Then the two sides close, and you can see nothing for minutes but a swaying crowd of boys, at one point violently agitated.

That is where the ball is, and there are the keen players to be met, and the glory and the hard knocks to be got. You hear the dull thud-thud of the ball, and the shouts of 'Off your side!' 'Down with him!' 'Put him over!' 'Bravo!' This is what we call a scrummage, gentlemen. . . .

"But see! it has broken; the ball is driven out on the Schoolhouse side, and a rush of the School carries it past the Schoolhouse players-up. 'Look out in quarters!' Brooke's and twenty other voices ring out. No need to call, though; the Schoolhouse captain of quarters has caught it on the bound, dodges the foremost School boys, who are heading the rush, and sends it back with a good drop-kick well into the enemy's country; and then follows rush upon rush, and scrummage upon scrummage, the ball now driven through into the Schoolhouse quarters and now into the School goal, for the Schoolhouse have not lost the advantage which the kick-off and a slight wind gave them at the outset, and are slightly 'penning' their adversaries. You say you don't see much in it all; nothing but a struggling mass of boys, and a leather ball which seems to excite them all to great fury, as a red rag does a bull. My dear sir, a battle would look much the same to you, except that the boys would be men and the balls iron; but a battle would be worth your looking at for all that, and so is a football match. You can't be expected to appreciate the delicate strokes of play, the turns by which a game is lost and won—it takes an old player to do that; but the broad philosophy of football you can understand if you will. Come along with me a little nearer, and let us consider it together.

"The ball has just fallen again where the two sides are thickest, and they close rapidly around it in a scrummage; it must be driven through now by force or skill till it flies out on one side or the other. Look how differently the boys face it! Here come two of the bulldogs bursting through the outsiders; in they go, straight to the heart of the scrummage, bent on driving that ball out on the opposite side. That is what they mean to do. My sons, my sons! you are too hot; you have gone past the ball, and must struggle now right through the scrummage and get round and back again to your own side before you can be of any further use. Here comes young Brooke; he goes in as straight as you, but keeps his head, and backs and bends, holding himself still behind the

ball, and driving it furiously when he gets the chance. Take a leaf out of his book, you young chargers. Here come Speedicut and Flashman, the Schoolhouse bully, with shouts and great action. Won't you two come up to young Brooke, after locking-up, by the Schoolhouse fire, with 'Old fellow, wasn't that just a splendid scrummage by the three trees!' But he knows you, and so do we. You don't really want to drive that ball through that scrummage, chancing all hurt for the glory of the Schoolhouse, but to make us think that's what you want—a vastly different thing; and fellows of your kidney will never go through more than the skirts of a scrummage, where it's all push and no kicking. We respect boys who keep out of it, and don't sham going in, but you—we had rather not say what we think of you.

"Then the boys who are bending and watching on the outside, mark them; they are most useful players, the dodgers; who seize on the ball the moment it rolls out from amongst the chargers, and away with it across to the opposite goal; they seldom go into the scrummage, but must have more coolness than the chargers. As endless as are boys' characters, so are their ways of facing or not facing a scrummage at football."

Among minor games which meet with favour in the playground are prisoners' base, "rounders" or "feeder," racket, leapfrog, and the like, while beyond bounds capital sport is provided by a paper-chase or "hare and hounds." Into any or all of these games, as into cricket and football, "character" enters; and they bring out, in the most striking manner possible, the mental and moral idiosyncrasies of the players. They show the plucky boy, who fears nothing, and is always foremost where danger or difficulty may be expected; the bragging boy, who blows his own trumpet with a loud shrill peal, as a cover for his craven cowardliness; the timid boy, who has been deprived of the true boyish dash and daring by unwise training, and shrinks from everything novel or unfamiliar with a painful shyness; the happy-go-lucky boy, who follows wherever any gallant spirit will lead, and plunges through brake and briar, like Shakespeare's Puck, with admirable unconcern. It is in the playground, I repeat, that the boy shows himself what he really is; there it is that you discover whether his good temper is genuine or a sham, what amount of control he can exercise over his passions, and whether his courage is

mere physical insensibility to pain or that high-minded consciousness which is based on a sense of duty. There it is that a boy, if he has any genuine stuff in him, reveals it; and there it is that keen eyes detect it or the want of it. For boys are the shrewdest and most unsparing of critics, with an utter contempt for pretence and affectation, and a quick and generous recognition of all that is true and honest. They soon take the measure of their companions; soon learn to appraise them at their exact value; and it is specially in the playground that this critical faculty bears fruit. Take a new boy, and set him down in the playground, the centre of a circle of cool and impartial observers; in ten minutes they will read you his character with all the exactness of the physiologist. Whether he be "muff," or "sneak," or "bully," or "cheat," or a "right good fellow," our young Lavaters will find him out, and thenceforth their intercourse with him will be regulated by that knowledge.

I have commented on the fallacy that boys with a partiality for athletic exercises will not distinguish themselves by their scholarship, though the elder Disraeli represents a disinclination for such amusements to be one of the signs and characters of a youthful genius. And he quotes Milton, who says—

"When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing."

On the other hand, Byron was always foremost at Harrow in all out-of-door sports, and everybody knows what a fine swimmer he was. Goethe, the great German, handled the foils splendidly and danced gracefully. Thomas Carlyle, the "sage of Chelsea," was an adept in the vigorous Scottish games. Cowper, the poet of "The Task," was a capital cricketer and pre-eminent at football. Alfieri, the Italian poet, was a great rider; and Tasso, like Goethe, was a skilful dancer and swordsman. It remains true, nevertheless, that boys who become absorbed in and devoted to gymnastics and athletics make but a poor figure when they come to grapple with the intricacies of Greek syntax. The illustrious men whom we have named gave only a portion of their *leisure* to their physical education; they threw their real strength into the higher culture.



CHAPTER IV.

THE BOY IN HIS LEISURE HOURS.

"All common things—each day's events,
That with the hour begin to end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend."

—LONGFELLOW.

In praise of leisure—Some rhymes about it—The right employment of leisure strongly advocated—As in the study of nature—Every season brings fresh objects of interest—What we may see in a green lane—A song for a summer morning—Lessons for our leisure lie close at hand—What nature teaches to him who carefully studies its aspects—The study of botany—Anecdote of Dr. Darwin—Wonderful structure of the flowers—The ranunculus—Pleasures of geology—Of chemistry—Of music—Musical instruments and the boys who play them—A box of tools and its virtues—Pets—Take care of your leisure.



WHETHER at school or at home, the boy will daily enjoy a certain amount of time on which there is no special calls. He cannot always be engaged upon his lessons or immersed in play; like his elders, he will have his "leisure." It is by no means an unimportant question, therefore, What will he do with it? Those hours or half-hours which are not occupied in the schoolroom or the playground, what use will he make of them? We have already protested against the enervating habit of "mooning"—*i.e.*, of loitering about, assiduously engaged in doing nothing; and we venture to hint that neither boys nor men can afford to waste their "leisure," any more than they can afford to waste the time definitely set aside for work. It is quite true that the most eager spirits weary at time of their lessons, and the greatest enthusiasts cannot always take delight in cricket or

in football ; and so, at the first glance, it seems difficult to say how they can turn their leisure to advantage. The difficulty is only apparent. There is much to be done for which "leisure" is the proper name. There are many pleasant ways of making pleasant hours, which will furnish some of the brightest and most agreeable memories in after years. Oh, happy Leisure ! boon companion of the schoolboy ! beneficent friend of the student ! What should we do without thee ? Where would be our blackberrying and nesting expeditions but for thee ? Where our quiet saunter by the well-known stream, rod in hand, and the joyous capture of the finny prey ? Where our long rambles into far-off valleys, or our exploration of the old castle's ivy-shrouded ruins, or our summer afternoon voyages on the lake of the waterlilies ? Leisure, blessed Leisure ! How thou dost refresh the weary mind, and bring balm and bliss to the careworn heart ! How often, when my corrugated brows have ached over the abstruse problems devised by Euclid for the torture of *boykind*, or when I have bent exhausted over the Hamiltonian mysteries of metaphysics, have I sighed, sweet maid, for the sunshine of thy presence !

Philosophy, O nymph austere !
 Logic, thou beldame, grim and drear !
 Ye Muses Nine, who twist and strain
 Each votary's perplexèd brain—
 Away ! No joy ye bring to me ;
 No smile upon your lips I see,—
 Away !

Scolastica ! I've wooed thee till
 My nerves with o'erwrought tension thrill !
 Like Paris, never—as I live—
 Would I the prize to Pallas give.
 Away ! no joy thou bring'st to me,
 No smile upon thy lips I see,—
 Away !

But come, sweet Leisure ! gentle maid !
 And woo me to the leafy shade,
 Or lead me where the leaping stream
 Fills all the pauses of my dream,—
 O come ! sweet joys thou bring'st to me,
 A smile upon thy lips I see,—
 Oh, come !

Of all the nymphs of Arcadie,
Sweet Leisure, none can rival thee ;
Of such a charm art thou posset
To lull the weary brain to rest !
Then come ; sweet joys thou bring'st to me,
A smile upon thy lips I see,—
Oh, come !

Many boys occupy their leisure in foolish pastimes, in smoking and card-playing, and other pursuits which are good neither for the body nor the soul. Our wiser readers will eschew these follies, and devote themselves to occupations which are instructive as well as agreeable. For instance, what can be more refreshing, more invigorating, more entertaining, than the study of nature? It is in our leisure hours that we may hope, by close and careful observation, to attain to a knowledge of its beauties ; to understand and appreciate all that lies embodied in the everlasting hills, the venerable woods, the ripple of the stream, the sweet breath of the flower. It is in our leisure hours that we may penetrate the mystery of the woodlands, and catch the organ harmonies of ocean as it rolls its waters on the rocky shore. It is in our leisure hours that we may survey the wonderful glory of the heavens, with their changing aspects of cloud and sunshine, or their deep silence of night, with its wealth of stars and broad tracts of sapphire-shining profundity. The study of nature will provide us with abundant recreation for our leisure. At one time we may find our way into some forest dell, where the ferny hollows are brimful of wild flowers, and all around wave the mossy branches of ancient oaks, and the song of birds animates the breezy air. At another we may revel in the thousand and one delights of spring, when the lark sings high at heaven's gate, and the melody of the thrush and the blackbird breaks through the green young leaves ; when the gorse lifts its golden spikes all along the hedgesides, and in every dingle and on every bank sparkle the starry primroses. "The wood anemones are in thousands. The turf here and there is actually sown with violets. Cowslips are putting up their heads all over the meadows, and the oxlip—half primrose, half cowslip—is also in bloom. On the purple stems of the woodspurge hang its pale green flowers, and in old orchards the ground is actually bestrewed with white violets. The laugh-like cry of the woodpecker and the

harsh note of the jay awaken the forest, and the dusky wings of rooks glance in the sun as they are driven from the new-sown fields by the clapper of the bird-boy."

At another time we may wander forth among the cornfields, which shine like burnished gold in the beams of the harvest sun, and rejoice in the glories of the autumn. How clearly, brightly blue the sky, its intensity of colour being relieved by soft flakes and patches of silvery cloud ! How full and rich the foliage ; for the trees seem to have budded afresh, and the oak and the elm are dotted with new shoots of a lighter tint. "The hedges put on the same vernal-looking hue, and the heather on the moors, and scabiouses, blue chicory, and large white convolvulus, hawkweeds, honeysuckles, and the small blue campanula make the fields gay. The nuts, still green, hang in prodigal clusters on the tall old hedges of woodland lanes."

Yet again we may make an excursion among the lonely hills, and climb to their green tops, which overlook so wide and rich a prospect :—

" Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,
And cattle grazing in the watered vales,
And cottage chimneys smoking from the woods,
And cottage gardens smelling everywhere."

The fresh pure air comes upon us with an invigorating influence like that of a strain of noble poetry, and sweet odours rise from beneath our feet as we tread down the thymy sward with its crop of golden crowfoot and star-eyed daisies. How the shadows swiftly chase each other across the green declivities, as flakes of cloud are wind-driven over the face of the blue heavens ! And what a glory rests upon the bosom of the sea, which from our high watch-tower seems waveless and windless, a vast sheet of immovable glowing silver, though we know that if we stood by its surfy margin we should see its wild waves champing and careering like war-horses in the press of the fight !

Now let us pass, while we have the leisure, into yonder green and leafy lane, so narrow that the hay-laden waggon can scarcely creep along it, and deposits on each hedge a store of sweet-smelling fodder, which the cattle in the meadows on either side scent from their place of rest, and

straightway hasten to enjoy. Honeysuckle and wild roses intertwine among the hawthorn, which is still covered with its fragrant red or pure white blossom, and the grassy banks are bright with all the darlings of the summer, with ragged robin, and St. John's wort, and the cranesbill, and the scarlet pimpernel. As we advance, we plunge into an ever-deepening shade, for the trees stand closer together, and tall ashes droop their boughs towards us, and oak and elm stretch towards each other their intermingling branches, while here and there the chestnut rears its pyramid of foliage, and the broad-leaved plane resounds with the hum of insects. How thickly the grasses crowd each little ditch and hollow!—some of them bearing feathery spikes that would make graceful plumes for Oberon's helmet or Titania's diadem; others shooting up in tall arrowy blades, that one can fancy to be used as spears and swords by fairy knights. And now, in a woody angle, we come to a brimming pool, fringed with flags and sedges, whither the water-wagtail comes to preen his wings and the dragonfly in search of food. Yonder shines in the dusky hedgerows the bright petals of the rose-red campion, a close relation of our old friend "ragged robin;" and here, where the wayside rill runs from the pool already spoken of, the water speedwell greets us with its blue-coloured flowers. Abundant everywhere we find the more familiar germander speedwell, the "bird's eye" of country children, though few of its bright blue flowers have lingered on into June: it is one of the gifts of spring. An anecdote of poor Jacques Rousseau is told in connection with this plant. In his earlier, happier days, he visited, accompanied by a friend, the neighbourhood of Geneva, and coming upon a plot sown with the speedwell, was deeply struck by its simple beauty. Many years after he again visited the same locality. In the interval he had attained a world-wide fame, but lost his tranquillity of mind and freshness of heart. He stood gazing on the fair scene before him, with his memory actively recalling the many changes of the past. Suddenly his eye fell on the clusters of the bright blue flower which had so pleased him in his early and innocent manhood, and such a crowd of recollections rushed upon him that he lost his self-control, and burst into tears.

Oh, the green lanes of merry England! How can one

better employ his leisure than by following them into all their pleasant recesses, and wandering through cornfield and pasture, up hill and down dale, past snug farm and rose-embowered cottage, the old village church and the moated grange ! What a delightful shelter they afford, with their natural bowers and arcades, to the traveller weary with the heat of a summer noon ! And how they fill the heart with happy emotions when their hedges glisten with the diamond drops of the morning dew, and from their ever-arching boughs drop the sweet melody of a hundred birds as they warble in sweetest concert their morning hymn ! It was in a green lane, and in the first hours of a summer day, that the following lines were written :—

Far spreads the light o'er lawn and lea,
 Far spreads the light o'erholt and hill,
 And in the sunshine laughing free
 Swift shoots each silver-crispèd rill :
 The flowers lift up their heads, refresht,
 To greet once more the day's new birth,
 And the grey earth's capacious breast
 Thrills with a sense of boundless mirth.

[Fling out your banners green, O trees,
 And wave them broadly to the sun ;
 Ring out your blithest strain, O breeze,
 The shadow's past, the night is done !
 See, see ! once more the morn appear
 With eye of hope and brow of calm ;
 While Nature's voices far and near
 Swell in a jocund matin-psalm.

The hawthorn whitens in the hedge,
 And half conceals the wren-bird's nest ;
 The iris-flag o'ertops the sedge
 Where sleeks the swan her curvèd breast.
 High 'mid the blue the lark's wings poise,
 From bough to bough the chaffinch quiver,
 While air is merry with the noise
 Of yonder swift abounding river !

The kine o'er all the pasture stray,
 Fresh from the farmyard's littered stall,
 Or loiter where from leafy spray
 And blossomed bough the shadows fall ;
 The mower plies his scythe amain,
 Rejoicing in the fragrant spoil ;
 For day revisits earth again,
 And man resumes his fruitful toil.

Above me shines the cloudless blue
 Filled with the splendour of the light ;
 Around me broadens far the view,
 In early summer radiance bright.
 How fair the scene where'er I gaze !
 How softly speed the happy hours !
 Then shall I not lift heart of praise
 To Nature's blest benignant powers ?

Leisure, then, cannot be more profitably or pleasantly employed than in the study of nature—a study, unfortunately, so utterly neglected at our schools and colleges, that most persons live their lives without even a transient intelligence of the greatness of its mysteries. It has always been to me a cause for astonishment and regret that our teachers, sacred and secular, should so absolutely ignore “the glorious light of all the sky,” the manifold beauties of what has been finely called “the living visible garment of God.” How few, for instance, of our divines, since Bishop Jeremy Taylor, have thoroughly sympathised with the wondrous works of nature ; with the splendour and uniform motion of the heavens, with the phenomena of those far-off spheres, which, to the philosophers of old, seemed to make glorious music as they preserved their unresting, rhythmic march, with the gracious fertility of earth, with the variety and profusion of its types of animal and vegetable life ! Yet how the prophets of Israel felt and understood these things ! With how strong an inspiration glowed the soul of David as he looked forth upon sky, and stars, and sea, and recognising everywhere the evidence of a love which is inexhaustible and a power which is inconceivable, exclaimed, “O Lord, how manifold are Thy works ! In wisdom hast Thou made them all ; the earth is full of Thy riches !” And St. Paul, too, when he proclaimed to the men of Athens the one true and only God, it was not within the stately walls of the Parthenon or the Erechtheion that he took his stand, but on the brow of the loftiest summit in the city, whence he and his audience could stretch their gaze across the blue *Ægean*, and let it rest on the dim outlines of its distant cloud-like isles ; or, turning inland, could survey with pleasure the orchard and the vineyard, the windings of the *Ilyssus*, and the vaporous ridges of *Hymettus* ; so that they could feel in all their force the Apostle’s words as he discoursed to them of “the God that made the world and all

therein," the "Lord of heaven and earth," who "dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

What lessons for our leisure lie close to our hand ! what sweet thoughts and fancies we may gather in our hours of rest which will bear blossom and fruit in our hours of work ! The silent solitude of the glen, haunted only by the eery shadows of the clouds, and the wild voice of the torrent which sweeps headlong from some unknown well-head in the far-off hills ; the lofty mountain-tops, whither, in the calm of night, comes the sweet, serene presence of the stars ; the pine woods, with their long dark avenues, solemn and stately, like vast cathedral aisles ; the sleeping lake, clasped in the embrace of the "everlasting hills," which rarely suffer the wind to disturb its deep repose ; the wide and open moorland, where the wayfarer treads lightly the elastic turf, while the balmy herbage, crushed beneath the passing foot, sends up an odour all about him like the breath of sweet music ; the meadow-side brook, sparkling with a thousand shifting rippling lights ; the grey mist of the autumn morning, which, as it rolls up the valleys and lifts from above the highlands, gradually reveals in all their freshness the varying beauties of the landscape ; the golden glory of the noon, the glow of the purple sunset, the starry stillness of night, the sweetness of summer rain ; the might and majesty of the tempest, when lurid lightnings fling their shafts of flame athwart the darkened heavens, and in the pealing thunder we hear the voice of Omnipotence ; and, lastly, the old yet ever-new sea, with its burden of memories, its melancholy, its grandeur, its beauty, its alternations of gentleness and power, which speaks to every heart a different language, rejoicing with the glad and sorrowing with the sorrowful ;—these are the sources from which, in our happy leisure, we may gather joy and inspiration.

The author of the Book of Job bids us stand still and consider the wondrous works of God. And we may well act upon his advice, for they present themselves to us under continually changing aspects, though all these aspects agree in one main design, all lead the thoughts of the observer from earth to heaven, from the finite to the infinite, from the transient to the everlasting. For whether we consider nature in the wonderful amplitude of its beauty, in the richness of its colouring, in the variousness of its forms and the modulation of its music ; whether we consider it in its profound tranquillity and in that

general character of permanency which so vividly contrasts with our own brief and uncertain space of existence ; whether we regard it in the light of a Comforter and a Consoler, which pours balm into the wounded heart and gives fresh strength to the enfeebled brain ; whether we are struck by its divine harmony and order, in which we find its separate and appropriate place provided for each moss, each shell, each crawling insect ; whether we direct our attention to the austere grandeur of its volcanoes, its mountains and ocean cliffs, or to the tender loveliness of its groves, gardens, and “ bowery hollows ; ” whether we are sensible of the mysterious influence which it exercises, subtly and silently, even on the most indifferent, the least sensitive, while in some quick hearts it awakens a passionate longing which is not wholly free from pain ; whether we think of the obedience to law which we see everywhere exhibited by it, from the courses of the punctual stars to the diurnal ebb and flow of the tides ; or whether we give ourselves up to a contemplation of its complexity and ingenuity, its exquisite contrivances, combinations, and adaptations—we must be equally impressed by the consciousness that in all things lives and works a soul of goodness, and that that soul is God. Happier we in reading the great book of nature than the sublimest of Pagan poets or the wisest of Pagan philosophers, for we may read it in the light of revelation, and see it transfigured in the Divine love ; and it is only when we thus see it and read it that we can understand all that it means, all that it has to tell us.

One of our most eloquent writers justly declares that in everything around us breathes religion ; that a calm and holy religion lives in the things of nature, which it would be well for us to imitate. He describes it as a meek and blessed influence, which steals in unawares upon the heart ; comes fresh from the hand of its Author, and glowing from the immediate presence of the great Spirit which pervades and quickens it. You may see it inscribed upon the arching sky ; it is eloquent in every star ; it is told by the sailing cloud and heard in the viewless wind ; it lives among the hills and valleys of the earth, where the keen mountain pinnacle pierces the rare atmosphere of eternal winter ; and it prevails in the depths of the mighty forest among its waves of dark-green foliage.

Observation of nature will lead us to the study of botany,

and there is none which will furnish a more agreeable occupation for leisure hours. Most of us love flowers, or at least we are pleased with their bloom or their fragrance; but few understand their structure, or can tell a petal from a sepal, a calyx from a corolla. Yet that love is only poor and trivial which does not spring from knowledge. I am confident that boys would prize flowers more dearly if they understood something of the mystery of their life, or something of their relationship to one another. Dr. Darwin speaks of a friend of his, remarkable for the quaint shrewdness of his observations, who, one day, when walking in a garden, pulled a flower of exquisite loveliness, and after warmly expressing his admiration of its various beauties, took up a clod of soil in his other hand, and simply but emphatically exclaimed:—"What but Almighty Power could extract *that from this?*" If there were anything ludicrous or eccentric in the manner, there was nothing but truth and sublimity in the statement. Everything in the work of God calls for loving admiration, but scarcely anything in the inanimate world brings together and inculcates so many wonders of designing wisdom and benevolence as the structure and qualities of a flower; and assuredly not a little is added to the surprise and pious feeling with which this delightful production is contemplated when we think of the crude materials from which it is elaborated. The beauty of form and colour, the sweetness of the fragrance, the delicate and skilful nature of the organisation, the careful provision, the forethought, the contrivance, the suiting of parts as regards the propagation of the species, the adaptation to the subsistence and enjoyment of the insect tribes, all produced by the ingenious union of a few simple and apparently unfit substances, cannot fail to excite in the reflecting mind the most lively sentiments of astonishment, and to force upon it the conviction that here without doubt is the finger of God.

There are three classes of flowers: the two-lobed, the one-lobed, the lobeless. These again are divided into sub-classes, and these sub-classes into orders and species. A knowledge of botany enables us, therefore, to appropriate every flower or herb we see to its proper place in the great system of vegetable life, and to determine its relationship to other plants. Take the sub-class of Thalamic florals, for instance; in this the various parts of the flower, its calyx, its corolla, its

stamens, are fastened on the seed receptacle beneath the germen. Such is the case with flowers of the *Ranunculus* order, and they belong, therefore, to the Thalamic florals. But what are the flowers included in the *Ranunculacæ*? You will be astonished to hear that among these are to be found not only the true *Ranunculus* family or crowsfoot, which cover our English meadows, but the anemones, and the globe-flowers, the marsh marigolds, the hellebores, the columbines, the aconites, and the larkspurs. A slight acquaintance with botany will show you how and why these flowers claim such close kinship with one another. This is but one point of interest; had we time or space, we could indicate many more. To boys desirous of acting on these remarks I may recommend as guides Balfour's "*Elements of Botany*," Miss Phee's "*Familiar Wildflowers*," Mrs. Buckton's "*Town and Window Gardening*," Lindley's "*School Botany*," Dr. Carpenter's "*Vegetable Physiology*," and Bright's "*Year in a Lancashire Garden*."

Another pursuit which may be taken up in our leisure is that of geology, and boys will find that a knowledge of it adds much to the interest of their walks abroad, explaining the structure of the hills or the dip of the valley, the character of the soil, the formation of the rocks, rendering intelligible what was previously obscure, and throwing such a flood of light on inanimate nature that they who run may read. And let not boys suppose that these sciences, botany and geology, or any other science, are not "to be understood" by young minds. They can learn enough, at all events, to give a new life and fresh interest to the scenes around them from such books as Jukes's "*School Class-Book of Geology*" and Geikie's "*Lessons in Physical Geography*;" enough to prepare and equip them for more extensive research in after years. As much may be said of chemistry. Consult Roscoe's "*Lessons in Elementary Chemistry*" and Brown's "*Chemistry*." Then music is a science or an art—call it which you will—with the practice and study of which we may make our leisure hours pass on wings of swiftness. It is more largely cultivated now by boys than was the case some thirty years ago, when, as I well remember, the boy who could hammer out a luckless tune or two on the piano, or extract a few doleful notes from a melancholy cor-
nopean, was regarded with awe and wonder. I know that the in-

strument chiefly in vogue among my schoolfellows was the Jew's harp, an instrument which has always been my aversion, though I think I have read of a persevering wight who attained to a considerable degree of proficiency upon it. Some of the more melodiously inclined among us would lay our hands upon empty cigar-boxes, and, by an ingenious use of wires of various degrees of thickness, convert them into *Æolian* harps, which, placed outside our dormitory windows, emitted more or less heartrending sounds when the wind blew upon them. Others resorted to the desperate expedient of hair-combs covered with paper, which they inserted between the teeth, and played in the fashion of the showman's Pandean pipes. Few had any real knowledge, and fewer still, I am sorry to say, any genuine love of music. But now almost every school has its group of instrumentalists, perhaps even its brass band; and the majority of boys, I think, learn either to play or sing. For those who have an ear and a voice, and feeling for time or tune, I know of no more agreeable or refining occupation for leisure hours than the study of music. "That which I have found the best recreation both to my mind and body," says Bishop Beveridge,[†] "whensoever either of them stands in need of it, is music, which exercises at once both body and soul, *especially when I play myself*; for then, methinks, the same motion that my hand makes upon the instrument, the instrument makes upon my heart. It calls in my spirits, composes my thoughts, delights my ear, recreates my mind, and so not only fits me for after business, but fills my heart at the present with pure and useful thoughts, so that when the music sounds the sweetliest in my ears, truth commonly flows the clearest into my mind." In the intervals of his work, Milton refreshed himself with music. Even the grave, honourable Lord Protector of the Commonwealth delighted, in his leisure moments, to hear his daughter at the organ. Queen Elizabeth, when set free for awhile from the cares of sovereignty, played on "the virginals;" and Sir Thomas More advised that a man, in marrying, should choose a wife who could "touch the lute," or sing to it, so that in his hours of rest he might enjoy the soothing influences of music. But it is still better when you can "touch the lute" yourself; and a boy's leisure will glide away on the "waves of sound" with a peculiar charm!

But *tot homines, tot sententiæ*, which, being paraphrased, means that different boys have different tastes. And a good thing, too; for the most enthusiastic of music lovers would have a surfeit if every lad in a large public school "touched the lute," or played on piano, violin, harp, cornet-à-piston, flute, or trombone. And here I must interpose a parenthetical remark. I said, a few pages back, that a boy's character was best read and detected in the playground, but it may also be seen, if he be "musical," in his choice of an instrument. Lads of a dreamy turn of mind, partial to the manufacture of melancholy verses, and given to star-gazing, who part their hair in the middle, and stand in picturesque attitudes under the shade of melancholy boughs, always select the flute; and pitiful, indeed, are the strains which they draw from it in their leisure moments. I have observed that boys of a patient and persevering disposition adopt the violin, and those, too, are the boys whom Heaven has endowed with the highest musical faculty. It is almost impossible to conceive that any person *without* such endowment would have the nerve to persevere at the fiddle, even if by accident he has been led to attempt it; for the instrument has a wonderful power of avenging itself, and responds to the bow of the unskilful player with groans and wails of the most terrible description, that cannot but penetrate his soul with remorse. It is a strange fact—but it *is* a fact—that the worst players always, or almost always, select the cornet-à-piston, thereby displaying their general "bumptiousness" and conceit. Whether a boy who can't play six consecutive notes is justified, even in his leisure, in making life hideous with the excruciating gasps and jars and sighs and grunts of a tortured cornet, I leave to the boys who tenant the same dormitory to determine. I once knew a boy who took to the drum; not to a kettledrum, but to a huge, a monstrous affair, as big as himself,—and he would retire to a corner of the playground in his intervals of leisure, and pound away at that mountain of stretched parchment with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. We bore with him for weeks, but at last Nature asserted her rights in the person of our dominie's gentle wife, and she induced our drummer to relinquish his tympanum in favour of—a trombone!

This, however, is a digression. There are boys possessed of a restless energy and superfluous activity, to whom, in their

leisure, it would be useless to recommend the study of music or botany, or any pursuit involving intellectual exertion. Such may find the relief they require in boat-building or carpentering; and there is much virtue in a box of tools! It is a grand thing to be occupied; for, as Dr. Watts very truly, though not very poetically, puts it—"Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." Idleness is the devil's opportunity. Who would not rather see Bob or Jack plying adze or chisel than lounging about with a cigar in his mouth, or "laying the odds" on the favourite for the Derby? Leisure becomes a curse where it is not usefully occupied—occupied, that is, in such a manner as to do good to both mind and body. For the boy who does not take kindly to the piano, the geologist's hammer, the botanist's tin case of specimens, or the chemist's cabinet, we recommend a box of tools. Who knows but that it may help him to a "vocation" in life? Did not Smeaton, the celebrated constructor of the Eddystone Lighthouse, begin as a boy by building a model windmill on the roof of his father's barn? The dexterity which John Heathcoat acquired when a boy in the use of tools stood him in good stead in his invention of the bobbin-net machine. It will be remembered that Jacquard, the inventor of the loom known by his name, displayed in his boyhood a remarkable turn for mechanics. We would not discourage a boy, therefore, if he show a greater aptitude for handling the chisel than for practising "scales."

Not a few boys find amusement in attending to their animal pets, and we have observed that such boys are generally of a kindly and gentle disposition, with, as might be expected, a liking for natural history. Curious are the fancies which boys show in this direction. I have known among the "pets" kept in a large school, rabbits, white mice, a canary, a black-bird, a bullfinch, and a ferret. At home the range is necessarily wider, and the list includes hedgehogs, guinea-pigs, all kinds of song-birds, pigeons (*ad libitum*), goldfish, and, of course, dogs of almost every breed. I think that, on the whole, rabbits obtain the preference, though I am not prepared to say that they deserve it. Many boys keep more than one pet, if they can afford it, and have the space and the liberty to do so; not a few support almost a small menagerie, which absorbs all their pocket-money and all they can beg

from the cook. Martin, in "Tom Brown's School-Days," is represented as entertaining snakes, and hedgehogs, and rats, a young family of field-mice, four young jackdaws, and an old magpie ; and that this is not an exaggeration I can testify from my own experience.

I might dwell on other ways of spending one's leisure agreeably—as, for instance, with pencil and sketchbook ; but enough has been said to bring out the lesson I wish to enforce, namely, that our leisure must not be *wasted*, must not be spent altogether idly or unprofitably ; that it is a portion of precious time, to be utilised like the hours more directly and definitely appropriated to culture. What I want is to see our boys doing *something*—something manly, innocent, invigorating, refining,—something not wholly un instructive,—something which for both mind and body shall at least be wholesome ! I have known so much evil originate in unemployed leisure, in hours given over to slothful indulgence ! Says a minor poet :—

"Of all the various tasks mankind employ,
'Tis sure the hardest leisure to enjoy."

A man may be known by the way he spends his leisure. In the hours of labour we are compelled to put a certain restraint upon ourselves ; in the hours of leisure we throw the mask aside and the world sees us as we are. The sum of the whole is :—*Take care of your leisure*, for the work-hours will take care of themselves.—Q.E.D.







CHAPTER V.

BAD BOYS.

"Few boys are born with talents that excel,
But all are capable of living well."

—COWPER.

About bad boys—What is meant by a bad boy—A ragged regiment—The sneak—A story of school life—The bully—How a bully was punished—Shy boys and what they suffer—The poet Shelley—Byron—The truant—The braggart—Captain Bobadil—The liar—The toady—The cad.

THIS is a chapter I would have gladly omitted ; but as I have undertaken to write about boys generally, I cannot conscientiously ignore the unfortunately considerable proportion of them who fall within the category of *mali pueri*. Truth compels me to acknowledge that there are wicked boys as there are wicked men ; and, indeed, I suppose there would be fewer of the latter if there were fewer of the former. It is not my intention to discuss the philosophical or theological aspect of the question, or to inquire *why* boys are bad, and involve myself and my readers in the labyrinthine difficulties of "original sin." I take the sad fact as it is : there *are* bad boys—too many of them ; boys bad *ab origine*, or made bad by adverse circumstances, such as injudicious home-training, or the want of training, excessive indulgence, the influence of evil companions, the weakness of an unstable disposition, and *idleness*, which old Chaucer so finely calls "the gate of all harms." There they are—in every school, even in the best-disciplined and most carefully organised ; in every little circle, though a strict supervision may be exercised, just as weeds spring up in

the finest cornfields. Dr. Johnson once exclaimed, with even more than his usual roughness :—"If you see three boys together, thrash them ; for either they have been, are doing, or are about to do, some mischief ;" a dictum almost as comprehensive as that of the Eastern khalif, who protested that there was no evil or misfortune but a woman was at the bottom of it, and when told of any fresh calamity, simply inquired, "Who was she?" Both khalif of the East and lexicographer of the West went far astray in their extravagant generalisations ; yet, whatever may be the truth as regards women, we cannot deny that the conduct of too many boys almost justifies the unfavourable estimate taken of the whole "order" by surly cynics.

Thank God, there are good boys—noble, manly, honest, truth-speaking boys ; and, so far as my experience goes, they are decidedly in the majority. Whether I am luckier than most people, I don't know ; but at the present time of writing, I wot of a score of boys, capital fellows, with not a really bad boy amongst them. Some of the said twenty are more thoughtless than they should be ; several are much too idle ; but none are hypocrites or liars or cowards ; none are "bad." Here let us pause a moment to decide on the elements that constitute "badness." I think there must be a deliberate intention to do wrong—what the law calls "a guilty knowledge"—an entire absence of conscientiousness, a wilful disregard of truth. Adults are often very ungenerous critics, and apply to boys a standard of judgment the application of which to themselves they would indignantly resent. An ebullition of high spirits, an outburst of carelessness, forgetfulness of the rules and regulations of the social code, they condemn with as much severity as if they were violations of the Decalogue. They expect from them a rigid propriety of behaviour and an austere decorum which would better become a seventeenth century Puritan than a strong, healthy, and lively boy of the nineteenth. Let us hear what an experienced teacher has to say upon this point :—"The moral nature of boys," he observes, "is only more ignorant, not less strong, than that of men. A boy has not so much knowledge of goodness as a man, but he has more faith in it. The true boy believes in as much of God as has been clearly revealed to his little mind, and earnestly and bravely acts up to his belief, showing it

forth by his works. He loves God's law not perhaps so much in word or in tongue as his elders, but more surely in deed and in truth. . . . A boy of ordinary generosity, if he has any money, will spend a proportionately far greater part of it upon his companions than grown-up people spend upon their hospitalities and charities. The average boy, I am certain, fights harder and more bravely against his besetting sin of idleness than the average man fights against luxury and avarice. A boy may be quick of temper and sharp of tongue, because his nature is frank and honest, and he knows not how to play the hypocrite, but he bears malice far less than, and not half so long as, a man does. . . . And, above all, this: that a boy does not hate reproof nor despise correction, does not harden his heart if detected in wrong-doing, and listen to pride urging him to fresh sin, stifling the wiser and holier voice of conscience."

Most boys err, as Cymon whistled, for "want of thought ;" but, though I am not prepared to denounce thoughtlessness as a sin, I cannot admit that it is altogether venial. The grand rule of conduct laid down for us is, that we should do unto others as we would that others should do unto us ; and thoughtlessness involves a disregard of the rights of our neighbours, which we by no means forgive if we ourselves are sufferers from it. It would be well for boys to consider a little before they act ; to reflect in what way their proposed sayings and doings will affect their teachers, friends, or school-fellows. They may depend upon it that they cannot break a school law or a home rule without inflicting annoyance, loss, and perhaps suffering, upon some person or other. "Cannot we do as we like with our own?" No, not if by so doing you will injure or harass your neighbour. We must respect the feelings, the wishes, even the prejudices, of those with whom we live in daily intercourse. The poet warns us

"Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels ;"

and in all we do or say it should be our constant care to refrain from wounding others.

And now, ye bad boys, marshal yourselves before me ! I see ye, a grim and grisly troop, with furtive eyes and gloomy countenances—a "ragged regiment," such as Falstaff would

have been ashamed to march through Coventry with ! There ye stand. The sneak, the bully, the truant, the braggart, the liar, the shirker, the Uriah Heep, the mocker, the cad. Oh, how happy would be the little world of school if ye could be purged out of it ! I sometimes wish a confederacy of good boys could be formed for the purpose of putting you down ; and no doubt much might be done in this direction if it were not for that sentiment of *camaraderie* which is so strong with school-boys, and induces them to condone or conceal the offences of their fellows. But the Sneak ! Why should he be suffered to mingle with honest lads ? He pollutes the atmosphere they breathe ! His hand is against every one, and I don't think I should feel very sorry if every one's hand were against him. It is loathsome to see him prowling about in search of an opportunity for annoying or injuring a comrade, slyly upsetting the ink on a clean exercise-book, or copying the solution of an algebraic problem, or retailing to A. some malicious gossip he has overheard or invented about B., or watching for some trifling, perhaps accidental or involuntary, breach of discipline, in order to report it to the master. Of course, I do not mean that a boy who witnesses or suffers by some open and intentional violation of school laws is not to make it known in the proper quarter ; on the contrary, as I have already contended, it is his duty to do so, and he will show his courage and honesty by braving the unpopularity that always attends such an act. But I am describing the mean-spirited "oaf," who makes it his chief business to spy out his schoolfellows' little delinquencies, and seeks to gain favour by carrying his tale of them to the authorities. This is the boy who gets into a remote corner of the playground and smokes bad tobacco, or bribes the servants to smuggle into his room some bottled beer or spirits, or entices his juniors into small bets which they are sure to lose, or browbeats the weak and timid into all kinds of unprofitable barter. He is capable of any dirty trick which he can render profitable—any dirty trick which is *safe*, and will not expose him to the risk of punishment, for it need hardly be said that the sneak is a great coward. This is the boy who, when prayers are being read, pinches some little fellow close at hand until he cries out, and then threatens him with "toco" in the playground if he should seek to excuse

himself by denouncing the sneak's cruelty. He is never so happy as when bringing chastisement, disgrace, and loss upon a schoolfellow. In the misfortunes or sufferings of others he finds his pleasure.

Here is an example of the sneak's mean maliciousness:—

"On each of the long iron-bound deal tables were placed two or three tallow-candles in tin candlesticks, and this was the only light the boys had. Of course these candles often wanted snuffing, and as snuffers were sure to be thrown about and broken as soon as they were brought into the room, the only resource was to snuff them with the fingers, at which all the boys became great adepts from necessity. One evening, Barker, having snuffed the candle, suddenly and slyly put the smouldering wick unnoticed on the head of a little quiet inoffensive fellow named Wright, who happened to be sitting next to him. It went on smouldering for some time without Wright's perceiving it, and at last Barker, highly delighted, exclaimed, 'I see a chimney,' and laughed.

"Four or five boys looked up, and very soon every one in the room had noticed the trick except little Wright himself, who unconsciously toiled on at the letter he was sending home.

"Eric did not like this, but not wishing to come across Barker, said nothing, and affected not to have observed. But Russell said quietly, 'There's something on your head, Wright,' and the little boy, putting up his head, hastily brushed off the horrid wick.

"'What a shame!' he said, as it fell on his letter, and made a smudge."

That was just the conduct in which a sneak delights, to injure a little boy who could not retaliate.

I have had something to say about the Bully in a previous chapter, but he is a character who so moves my indignation that I perforce return to him here. This is the boy who avails himself of his superior strength to make miserable the lives of the feeble and nervous, the new boy just fresh from the sweet, tender influences of home, the timid boy who suffers from constitutional weakness. All of us have met with this offensive character on the larger stage of the world as well as in the narrow sphere of school life, and all of us rejoice when, as is frequently the case, he comes to grief, when some firm hand

strips him of his peacock feathers, and exposes him in his raggedness, the bare mean scarecrow that he really is. There's a capital portrait of a bully in "Tom Brown's School-Days," one Flashman, who began, as such boys do, by being a toady, and ended, as such boys do, by being a brute. Tom Brown had refused to fag for him, and Flashman laid wait, caught him before second lesson, and receiving a point-blank "No" when told to fetch his hat, seized him and twisted his arm, and went through the other methods of torture in use. "He couldn't make me cry, though," as Tom said triumphantly to the rest of the rebels, "and I kicked his shins well, I know." But soon it crept out that a lot of the fags were in league, and Flashman excited his associates to join him in bringing the young vagabonds to their senses; and the house was filled with constant chasings, and sieges, and lickings of all sorts; and in return the bullies' beds were pulled to pieces and drenched with water, and their names written up on the walls with every insulting epithet which the fag invention could furnish. The war, in short, raged fiercely; but soon, as Diggs had told them, all the better fellows in the form gave up trying to fag them, and public feeling began to set against Flashman and his two or three intimates, and they were obliged to keep their doings more secret; but, being thorough bad fellows, missed no opportunity of torturing in private. Flashman was an adept in all ways, but above all in the power of saying cutting and cruel things, and would often bring tears to the eyes of boys in this way which all the thrashings in the world wouldn't have wrung from them. And as his operations were being cut short in other directions, he devoted himself chiefly to Tom and East, who lived at his own door, and would force himself into their study whenever he found a chance, and sit there, sometimes alone, sometimes with a companion, interrupting all their work, and exulting in the evident pain which every now and then he could see he was inflicting on one or the other.

The Shy Boy is found in every school. Sometimes his nervousness is due to a naturally sensitive disposition and delicate health; sometimes to an injudicious home-training, the excessive affection, perhaps, of a widowed mother; but whatever the cause, it ought to elicit sympathy, and it calls for tender and careful treatment. Yet the shy boy is the favourite victim

of the bully. He cannot resist ; he shrinks from complaint, and, therefore, the bully is safe in torturing him ; not infrequently carrying the torture to a dangerous extreme. An experienced schoolmaster has justly said that the objects of the bully's ill-usage are not "those over whom there is any lawful or conventional right," but "the weak, the timid, the eccentric, and the unsociable ; sometimes those who have none of those feelings, but who from some peculiarity of character are not acceptable to all, who are nevertheless capable of warm friendship, who are even possessed of no common mental powers, which *might* have expanded into great private and public usefulness, but which *may* be also compressed and concentrated in a sensitive mind till they waste and devour it, till they lead to misanthropy, or perhaps to the more fatal error of doubting the justice of Providence because man is unjust." Shelley, the poet, suffered greatly from ill-used authority and ill-used strength, and the suffering was not without its permanent effects. A stripling, pale and bright-eyed, he took no part in the school-games. He also refused to fag ; and this of itself subjected him to bullying, and to "Shelley-baits," in which he was often hunted "up town." As a defence, he charged the handle of his door with electricity, so that he might be left undisturbed to pore over his beloved books ; and he inflicted a smart shock on the tutor, Mr. Bethel, who came to inquire into the noise caused by the machine.

"Strange were his studies, and his sports no less ;
 Full oft, beneath the blazing summer noon,
 The sun's convergent rays, with dire address,
 He turned on some old tree, and burnt it soon
 To ashes ; oft at eve the fire balloon,
 Inflated by his skill, would mount on high ;
 And when tempestuous clouds had veiled the moon,
 And lightning rent and thunder shook the sky,
 He left his bed to gaze on Nature's revelry !"—*Moultrie.*

Byron suffered also from the inconsiderate cruelty of his schoolfellows, though he was better able to punish a bully than the fragile Shelley. His club-foot was made the mark of numerous coarse practical jokes ; for a physical defect is the bully's special delight. He tells us himself that for the first year and a half he hated Harrow ; and it is said that he sometimes woke in the morning to find the deformed limb hanging over a tub

of cold water. Once, on a public speech-day, he was to have recited the verses which Virgil, in his *Æneid*, gives to Oranus, while Peel took the part of Turnus; but he suddenly changed his mind, and preferred that of Latinus, fearing, no doubt, that the line—

“*Ventosâ in linguâ, pedibusque fugacibus istis*” . . .

would have drawn some ridicule upon him. Byron, however, was not wanting in courage or energy: he conquered his shyness and beat his bullies, made many attached friends, and became a leader in all the sports, schemes, and mischief of the school. But this is not a common result: boys deficient in Byron's intellectual and physical capacity are cowed and depressed by the ill-treatment they receive, and the unkindness of which it is the outcome, and sink into a morbidly depressed condition, from which, sometimes, they never wholly recover. The poet has expressed their misery in beautiful verse:—

“There rose
From the near schoolroom voices that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes—
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.”¹

I once saw a bully undergo a peculiarly satisfactory punishment. At H—— School, Thompson was the terror of all the little boys, whom he seemed to take a special delight in ill-treating. If he passed them in the playground he took their caps off and threw them over the wall, or he pinched or cuffed them, and he was continually sending them on errands “beyond bounds,” which led to their incurring frequent “repetitions.” They were too frightened to complain to the masters;

¹ Mr. Rossetti, referring to Shelley's Etonian experiences, says:—“The boys would goad him into paroxysms of rage, and then run away from the explosion; he never pursued them, but requited their attentions by assisting them in their tasks. On one occasion, while Shelley was asleep, some of his persecutors blackened his face; on awakening he was wild with horror. ‘The few who knew him loved him,’ says a schoolfellow, Mr. Parke. He had no liking for the time-honoured ‘grind’ of making Latin verses, and would not ‘submit to the trammels of the grinders;’ yet his performances in this line availed to procure him prizes. In like manner, though he neglected the regulated school-attendance, he translated at Eton half of Pliny's ‘Natural History.’ . . . The rigid Dr. Keate was the headmaster at this period. He flogged Shelley liberally, and the scapegrace in return plagued him without stint.”

moreover, they dreaded the ill-repute of "sneaks," than which nothing is more abhorrent to a schoolboy. Call him a fool or a liar, and he will forgive you; but call him a sneak, and the insult is indelible. One day, before second lessons, Charlie Trowbridge, a curly-headed little fellow about twelve years old, was putting his desk in order as Thompson lurched by to his seat nearer the upper end of the school. Charlie was the very model of preciseness: his books were always in their places; he could always find his pen or pencil when he needed it; his exercise-books were as spotlessly white, if not as vacant, as that "virgin page" of which Mr. Moore so agreeably sings. Inside the lid of his desk he had pinned or pasted up some favourite pictures, which were a constant source of interest and amusement to himself and his mates; and on this particular occasion he was adding to them a photograph of his mother, his eyes glistening with affectionate pride as he surveyed the well-known lineaments. Thompson's rapid glance detected the photograph, and he saw at once a splendid opportunity of annoying a small boy who could not defend himself.

"Now you, Trowbridge," he exclaimed, "hand me that ugly phiz!"

"Leave me alone, Thompson," cried Charlie; "you shan't hurt my mother's photo."

"It's the very thing I want, youngster. I'm drawing the portrait of an Indian squaw, and I'll just copy your mother's hideous old features."


"O Thompson, do not hurt it; take anything else you like—but that is my mother! And she's not hideous—how dare you say so?"

"Isn't she? and ain't you just like her? Come, give it to me, or I'll make you."

Little Charlie burst out crying, but he had the pluck to shut his desk, and throw himself upon it.

"Leave him alone," shouted Freddy Moore, a chum of Charlie's, and a year or so older; "you must be a big brute to insult a fellow's mother."

A knock on the head which stretched Freddy on the floor was the bully's only reply.

"Do you hear, young Trowbridge? Give me the  you'll catch it. You won't? Then here goes."

And catching hold of Charlie by the right wrist, he twisted his arm round with so much force, that Charlie thought it was broken. Clenching his teeth, however, he uttered neither sigh nor groan, but still clung desperately to the desk which contained his little treasures.

"Will you give in, you cheeky young vagabond?"

"Never!" hissed Charlie, through his teeth.

"Then we'll try another screw," and the brute repeated the operation. Charlie made no sign.

"He has fainted," cried Freddy Moore, who by this time had recovered his feet. "What a beast you are!"

Several boys had gathered round, and a commotion was caused which attracted the attention of young Danvers, a fine high-spirited youth, whose abilities had raised him, though he was only fourteen, to the fifth class. He was beloved by the school for his generous temper, his truthfulness, modesty, and, not least, his courage. Making his way through the throng, "What's up?" he inquired; and observing Trowbridge's white face, immediately sent two of the boys for water, while he listened to Moore's account of the affair.

"Well, you *are* a bully!" he exclaimed, turning round upon Thompson. "Fancy a fellow's making game of a little chap's mother, and half killing him because he won't give up her portrait! There's not another boy in the school would have done so mean a thing."

"Shut up!" said Thompson sulkily; "it's nothing to do with you; mind your own business."

"It is everybody's business to prevent cruelty," replied Danvers.

"You'll get a licking, Danvers, if you cheek me any more."

"A licking! and from *you*? Oh no, I think not. But you clear out of here, and leave Charlie alone, or"——

Here Danvers began to turn up the sleeves of his jacket. Without delay a ring was formed, and Thompson found that he was expected to take up the challenge so gallantly thrown down. He was of about the same stature as Danvers, but with a stouter and burlier form, and it seemed evident to the bystanders that he would easily beat the slender and delicate Danvers. To their surprise, however, he showed no inclination for a fight. He turned red, then pale, then red again; and muttering something about punching Danvers' head

when he had more time, he turned away, and endeavoured to break through the crowd, who, detecting his cowardice, saluted him with a storm of hisses. Danvers, however, was too quick for him. Catching him by the collar of his jacket, he said :— "This is not the first time I have caught you bullying the small boys, and now I intend to punish you for it."

Flinging his arms round like the sails of a windmill, Thompson dealt his captor a heavy blow, which Danvers returned by a straightforward hit that damaged the bully's right eye materially. Will it be believed that he began to cry, and whimpering out that he had taken medicine and could not fight, he made a second effort to force his way out of the arena?

Danvers seized the bully by the collar of his jacket, and shook him soundly. "Here, you boys," he cried, "one of you get me a piece of chalk." The chalk was quickly provided, everybody wondering what Danvers intended to do with it. "He'll make him swallow it," said one. "He is going to whiten his face all over to hide his blushes," said another. "Thompson," cried a third, "get ready for a dose of chalk mixture."

Meanwhile, holding Thompson firmly, in spite of his efforts to escape, Danvers proceeded to chalk on the back of his jacket, in very legible letters, the word

BULLY,

to the great amusement of the spectators, who burst into a roar of laughter, when they understood what Danvers had done. Even Charlie smiled. The good-tempered little fellow, however, begged Danvers to let the bully off, but Danvers refused to listen. "This fellow," he said, "has long been the cause of disturbance in the lower forms. He was left alone because he was big and strong. But I was sure he was a coward, and I determined when I caught him at any of his shabby tricks to show him in his true colours. Now, you Thompson," he said, as that worthy made futile efforts to rub off the obnoxious marks, "I have written your character on your back. It saves a good deal of trouble, you see; 'tisn't every one has the time for studying character. You will be good enough to let it remain there until after second lesson. If you rub it off, I'll thrash you; or if anybody rubs it off

you, I'll thrash *him*. Bullying is a mean and cowardly thing, and we senior boys are resolved to put a stop to it. For a great fellow like you to worry and hurt a little boy like Charlie Trowbridge is simply scandalous. But there goes the bell. Boys, to your places."

All through second lesson Thompson wore his character upon his back. The masters saw it, of course, and it was evident they were well pleased that he had received so appropriate a punishment. As for the boys, it was prime fun for them. The wag of the school went up to him, made a low bow, and said he was glad to observe that Mr. Thompson had been invested with a new decoration. He had always thought, it was true, that distinguished persons wore their orders on their breasts, but probably he wore his on his back because *that* was the only part of his body an enemy was likely to see! As they passed him, the little fellows spelled the word aloud, B-U-L-L-Y—"Bully." Thompson made frantic efforts to get rid of the disgraceful letters, sometimes with his hands, sometimes by rubbing up against the desk or wall; but whenever Danvers caught him in the attempt, he threatened him with condign chastisement, and the bully was so thoroughly cowed that he immediately desisted. So it was not until he went to bed that he succeeded in obliterating the marks of his disgrace. He appeared next morning with his jacket well brushed; but the incident was not forgotten, and whenever he showed a disposition to ill-treat a little boy, the question, "Do you want your jacket chalked?" brought him to his senses.

Not much need be said about the Truant. I don't mean the boy who, once or twice in his school-life, is tempted by a bright summer day to prefer a saunter in the cornfields to his desk in the hot classroom, but the boy who regularly cheats his master and his parents, and palms off upon them excuse after excuse for his non-appearance, even after frequent detection. A truant soon develops into a coward and a liar; for, to avoid being found out, he practises every "dodge" he can think of, and leads a life of constant imposture. Closely allied to him is the Shirker, the boy who never does a lesson if he can help it, and, when he does it, never does it with care or accuracy. He is an adept at petty stratagems for hoodwinking his teachers and slipping out of their way; for getting

off half his "construe," or throwing the *onus* of answering on the boy next above or below him, at putting off his exercises and escaping his impositions. A troublesome fellow to deal with. Watch him ever so closely, and he still contrives to elude you. Give him a hundred lines to write out, and he will manage, by delays, or manœuvres, or brazenfaced impudence, to shirk fully half of them. If he only devoted as much attention to learning as he does to shirking his lessons, he would rise to the head of the school; but, as it is, he sticks in the lowest form, and unless he mends his ways, there he will remain. Such a boy has no sense of honour, no consciousness of duty; and we may expect that in later life he will be always drawing back from his engagements, neglecting his promises, and breaking his plighted word.

The Braggart is a worthy companion of these disagreeable and unwholesome individuals. He is always boasting of what he has done and said; of the way in which he has dared the masters; of the wonderful kicks he made at football; of the tremendous innings he has had in impossible games of cricket; of his cleverness, his luck, his prowess. He may be described as twin brother to the bully, and he is generally as great a coward. His courage is mostly a sham:—

"He speaks plain cannon, fire, and smoke, and bounce."

But put him to the proof, and he fails most miserably. This is the boy who talks of his parents, and relatives, and friends in high-sounding phrases; who narrates to any one who will listen to him the most wonderful tales of what he has seen, undergone, attempted, and achieved; who is always boasting of what he will do somewhere or other, somehow or other, at some time or other! Ben Jonson has sketched such an one in his Captain Bobadil:—

"I am a gentleman," says this most illustrious braggart; "and live here obscure and to myself; but were I known to her Majesty and the lords—observe me—I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of her subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of her yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. . . . I would select nineteen men to myself throughout the land; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit, strong and able

constitution ; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have ; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your imbroggiato, your passada, your montanto, till they could all play very near or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong, we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March or thereabouts, and we would challenge twenty of the enemy ; they could not in their honour refuse us. Well, we would kill them ; challenge twenty more, kill them ; twenty more, kill them too ; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day, that's twenty score ; twenty score, that's two hundred ; two hundred a day, five days a thousand ; forty thousand, forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days kills them all up by computation. And this will I venture my poor gentleman-like means to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood, that is, civilly by the sword."

In every large school you will meet with a Captain Bobadil. For that matter, I fear there is something of the Bobadil in all of us—a tendency to vaunt our wit or wisdom, to make the most of our achievements, to set ourselves in the best light, to draw attention to the fine points which we think we possess ; a tendency that needs stern repression, lest it should plunge us into ridicule and disgrace. True genius and true courage are always modest ; men like Sir Isaac Newton, or Nelson, or Marlborough, or John Howard, do not need to proclaim their deeds upon the housetop. The strong men are silent and self-contained, like Wellington and Prince Eugene.

By a natural transition we pass on to the Liar :—most despicable of all characters, worse even than the sneak and the bully, though it is to be observed that the sneak and the bully are necessarily untruthful, are liars on occasion, and, when opportunity serves, not less persistent and audacious in their falsity than the liar *par excellence* ;—the boy who has always an equivocation or a falsehood on his tongue. Unhappy mortal ! the habit of lying grows upon him until it becomes a mania, and he adheres to it though aware that he has been found out and that no one gives him credence, that no one is weak enough to trust to his word, let him pledge it ever so strongly. This lamentable mental disease is so insidious in character and fatal in effect, that parent and teacher should

be watchful to arrest it in its very first symptoms. The first lie should be sternly punished. No mercy should be shown to the offender; it is a case in which to be cruel is to be kind. Persevere until you have awakened a spirit of practical repentance, and revived and strengthened the boy's better feelings, lest he go on from bad to worse, and it should come to be said of him (in Shakespeare's words) that he is—

“Past all shame—so past all truth !”

Recall that impassioned passage in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedies :—

“Oh, my best sir, take heed,
Take heed of lies ! Truth, though it trouble some minds,
Some wicked minds that are both dark and dangerous,
Preserves *itself*, comes off, pure, innocent !
And, like the sun, though never so eclipsed,
Must break in glory ! Oh, sir, lie no more !”

I can hope and believe in the reform and recovery of any boy, bad as he may be, who is not a liar; but the old seasoned fibber and equivocator, for him and of him I can hope nothing. Happy are the boys to whom can be applied the eulogium which the historian and statesman Clarendon bestows on Lord Falkland :—“He was so severe an adorer of truth that he could as easily have given himself leave to steal as to dissemble.”

Passing over the Toady, the lad who fawns upon authority or rank or wealth—a character not very common among schoolboys, who, as a rule, are great levellers, and among themselves enthusiastic democrats, we glance at the Cad, in whom all the worst qualities of every other species of the disagreeable genus we are considering seem to concentrate. Hear him speaking irreverently of sacred things ! Hear him dropping foul oaths and blasphemies from his poisonous lips ! Hear him making a mock of all that is good, pure, and true ! And oh ! turn away from him with a shudder ! Pray for him—he needs it ; but as you love your soul, shrink from his companionship ; close your ears to his vile utterances ; let not the Upas-shadow of his influence fall upon your young life ! One such boy becomes a source of contamination for a whole school—*fons et origo mali*. With his lewd anecdotes and gross

suggestions he infuses a poison into the blood, of which it is not easy to get rid; and years hence, when memory brings them back to you, unbidden and unwelcome, you will regret that you listened to them, even for a moment! The sneak, the bully, the braggart; these are creeping creatures after their kind, but at least they seldom injure any but themselves. Far otherwise is it with the cad; he drags down to his own depth of degradation every one who weakly permits of his approaches. He is like the ant-lion, which lies await in its sandy lair, and when an incautious insect draws near, flings over it a shower of dust, which brings it within its clutches. He cannot be at rest alone. He wants a companion to listen to his impurities, and to admire his "fastness;" a companion to whom he can retail the latest music-hall jest, the last bit of slang which he has picked up in the billiard-room. God help him! He who sows the wind must reap the whirlwind. God help him! May his eyes be opened to the danger of his course before it is too late, so that he may not be compelled to look back with tears to a sinful youth as the prelude to a wrecked and ruined manhood:—

*"Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede Pæna claudo."*





CHAPTER VI.

FRIENDSHIPS OF BOYS.

“Candid, and generous, and just,
Boys care but little whom they trust,—
An error soon corrected ;
For who but learns in riper years
That man where smoothest he appears
Is most to be suspected ?”

—COWPER.

Schoolboys and their friendships—Byron and his friend Wingfield—The poet Gray and Richard West—Gray’s sonnet *in memoriam*—Cowper and Russell—Warren Hastings and Impey—Friendships at school—The inseparable chums—Cowper on friendship—Influence of example—Choose your friends carefully—Words of counsel.



CANNOT imagine a schoolboy without a friend. David Copperfield had his beloved Tommy Traddles. Tom Brown reposed in sweetest confidence upon Harry East. Eric Williams found a brother-in-arms in Edwin Russell. The present writer hardly dares to place himself on the same level as these historic characters, but well does he remember to this day the two staunch comrades to whom he was bound in bonds of the warmest affection. And, to speak of more famous men, had not Lord Byron his Wingfield? “Of all human beings,” he says, “I was, perhaps, at one time, the most attached to poor Wingfield.” In one of his early poems he apostrophises him thus tenderly:—

"Alonzo ! best and dearest of my friends,
 Thy name ennobles him who thus commends :
 From this fond tribute thou canst gain no praise ;
 The praise is his who now that tribute pays. . . .
 Friend of my heart, and foremost of the list
 Of those with whom I lived supremely blest ! "

A boy's heart is sufficiently capacious, however, for half-a-dozen friendships, though *one* will always be closer and more intimate and dearer than the others. So Byron in his journal writes :—"My school friendships were with me *passions* (for I was always violent) ; but I do not know that there is one which has endured (to be sure some have been cut short by death) till now. That with Lord Clare began one of the earliest and lasted longest—being only interrupted by distance—that I know of. I never hear the word '*Clare*' without a beating of the heart even now. . . . The prodigy of our school-days was George Sinclair ; he made exercises for half the school (*literally*), verses at will, and themes without it. . . . He was a friend of mine, and in the same remove, and used at times to beg me to let him do my exercise—a request always most readily accorded upon a pinch, or when I wanted to do something else, which was usually once an hour. On the other hand, he was pacific and I savage ; so I fought for him, or thrashed others for him, or thrashed him himself, to make him thrash others when it was necessary, as a point of honour and stature, that he should so chastise ; or we talked politics, for he was a great politician, and were very good friends." If Byron had his Wingfield and his Clare, Canning had his Lord Henry Spencer, and Charles James Fox was strongly attached to Sir George Macartney. Gray, the poet, as a schoolboy at Eton, found his "other self" in the amiable and accomplished Richard West, who was fully worthy of the affection bestowed upon him. With West for a period of eight years Gray enjoyed what the moralist calls "the most virtuous as well as the happiest of all attachments—the wise security of friendship—*Par studiis, ævique modis ;*" and their mutual attachment was terminated only by West's early death. The latter, in one of the poems he left behind him, speaks of himself and his friend as walking hand in hand—

"Through many a flow'ry path and shelly grot,
 Where Learning lulled us in her private ways."

And Gray composed a fine and tender sonnet on the death of his friend :—

“ In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And redd’ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire ;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields renew their green attire.
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine ;
A different object do these eyes require :
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my heart the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men :
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear :
To warm their little loves the birds complain ;
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.”

Cowper’s special friend at school was one William Russell, and the two shared together their studies and their recreations ; together pored over Virgil and composed Latin verses ; and together were accustomed

“ To kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw ;
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dextrous pat.”

Another of the future poet’s comrades was Warren Hastings, afterwards famous as the founder of our Indian Empire. Their friendship neither the lapse of time nor a wide dissimilarity of opinions and pursuits could wholly dissolve. “ It does not appear that they ever met,” says Macaulay, “ after they had grown to manhood. But forty years later, when the voices of many great orators were crying for vengeance on the oppressor of India, the shy and secluded poet could image to himself Hastings the Governor-General only as the Hastings with whom he had rowed on the Thames and played in the cloister, and refused to believe that so good-tempered a fellow could have done anything very wrong.” Of Hastings himself, one of the favourite associates was Elijah Impey. “ We know little about their school-days. But we think we may safely venture to guess that whenever Hastings wished to play any trick more than usually naughty, he hired Impey with a tart or a ball to act as fag in the worst part of the prank.” After a separation of

many years they met again in Calcutta, Hastings as Governor-General and Impey as Chief-Justice.

But we need not multiply these examples. Every school-boy knows what ardent friendships are formed at school ; and he knows, too, that if those formed in later life are more lasting, they are not more fervid or more generous. There is something romantically beautiful in the attachment of two schoolfellows ; it is so unselfish, so devoted, so all-absorbing. They are wholly blind to each other's faults, unless, indeed, they persuade themselves that they are virtues ; are ready at any moment to bear each other's burdens or undertake each other's defence ; cherish the same likings and the same enmities ; and so blend together their thoughts, hopes, aspirations, tastes, as almost to efface the lines of their separate individualities. Together in the playground, together in the study, together in the hours of leisure, the currents of their lives flow in one and the same channel. You may see them, seated, with their arms round each other's neck, poring over some page of surpassing interest, or arm-in-arm they climb the green hillside and trace the windings of each leafy lane. They endeavour to get together in the cricket eleven ; and in the school-boat, if one be stroke-oar, the other is No. 2. Their constant object is to serve each other, to ward off pain and punishment from each other, to stand side by side in any danger or difficulty that may befall. So complete is their self-devotion, that each eagerly surrenders his tastes, and even his opinions, to the other's will. You never find them separated ; if you want *fortis Gyas*, you are sure to find *fortis Cloanthus* close at hand. They have not learned to doubt the sincerity of friendship, and so their faith is free from all suspicion, their love from all alloy. Faults of temper are overcome by this elevated and self-denying devotion ; and he who towards the bulk of his companions displays a quick and violent disposition will, in all his dealings with his friend, his brother-in-arms, his true and tried associate, be dove-like in his gentleness, holding his nature under firm control by the magic of his strong affection. Such friendship we shall never know again ! In after life we are incapable of so much disinterestedness, so much self-control, so ready and willing an obedience. In after life we find it more difficult to trust, and are, therefore, more reluctantly trusted ; and between us and the friends of our manhood springs up a partition of

reserve which is not to be easily removed. It was surely after observation or experience of a schoolboy's friendship that Cowper wrote as follows :—

“ That secrets are a sacred trust,
That friends should be sincere and just,
That constancy befits them,
Are observations on the case
That savour much of commonplace,
And all the world admits them. . . .

“ But will sincerity suffice?
It is indeed above all price,
And must be made the basis ;
But every virtue of the soul
Must constitute the charming whole,
All shining in their places.

“ There is a sober serious grace,
A sanctity in friendship's face,
That proves it heaven-descended ;
The love of woman not so pure,
Nor, even when truest, so secure
To last till life is ended.

“ The noblest friendship ever shown
The Saviour's history makes known,
Though some have turned and turned it ;
And, whether being crazed or blind,
Or seeking with a biassed mind,
Have not, it seems, discerned it.

“ O friendship ! if my soul forego
Thy dear delights while here below,
To mortify and grieve me,
May I myself at last appear
Unworthy, base, and insincere,
Or may my friend deceive me ! ”

It may be admitted, perhaps, that school friendships, that, in fact, all boyish friendships, are somewhat too hastily made ; that they are not always calculated to gratify anxious parents. Both parents and teachers would do well to bestow a little consideration on this subject, and to see that boys are “ mated ” properly ; that lads of a weak and easy disposition, who readily succumb to external influences, are brought into contact with lads of strong principle and a firm steady

character. Much may be done in this way to promote the moral culture of a young mind. A good companion is worth any amount of preaching and teaching; the young learn more quickly from the example of those around them than from books, and many a great man has owed his usefulness in life to the lessons unconsciously taught by the virtues of a friend. Example is the most eloquent of all instruction. Hence we may understand what Francis Horner meant when, acknowledging the benefits he had derived from his many happy friendships, he exclaimed :—"I cannot hesitate to decide that I have derived more intellectual improvement from them than from all the books I have turned over." Sir Charles Bell says very forcibly :—"A good deal has been said about education, but they appear to me to put out of sight example, which is all in all. My best education was the example set me by my brothers. There was, in all the members of the family, a reliance on self, a true independence, and by imitation I obtained it." We may add a quotation from Edmund Burke. "Is example nothing?" he inquires. "It is everything. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other." And one from Sir Charles Sedley, who, if he did many foolish things, frequently said a wise one :—

" Example is a living law, whose sway
Men more than all the written laws obey."

And how can we do otherwise than imitate, perhaps unconsciously, the ways and habits and modes of thought of him with whom we spend our most impressionable years? It is during the period of youth that the plant receives the direction we wish to give it; in our boyhood we are most easily affected by the influences which will make or mar our manhood.

The sum of it all is this: that our boys should not rush into friendships with imprudent precipitancy; that they should endeavour to know something of the character of those to whom they give their confidence. It may be said that discrimination of character is not to be expected in boys; but at least they can tell whether their companion's words and actions "square" with their sense of right. The conscience of boyhood is usually keen enough to discern

good from evil, the shadow from the reality ; and an innocent nature instinctively revolts against the first suggestions of wrong. If we draw back immediately when thus warned, we shall be safe. In choosing a friend, it should be our object to select some one superior to ourselves ; a loftier mind, a more sympathetic soul, so that we may be led upward and onward by the power of his wise example. "We ought always," says Addison, "to make choice of persons of real worth and honour for our friends, that, if they should ever cease to be so, they will not abuse our confidence, nor give us cause to fear them as enemies." It is only a strong hand that can give us real support ; to lean upon one feebler than ourselves is to involve both in destruction. "If thy friends," writes Sir Walter Raleigh, "be of better quality than thyself, thou mayest be sure of two things : the first, that they will be more careful to keep thy counsel, because they have more to lose than thou hast ; the second, they will esteem thee for thyself, and not for that which thou dost possess." It was good advice which Lord Collingwood, the famous admiral, gave to a young man :—"Hold it as a maxim that you had better be alone than in mean company. Let your companions be such as yourself, or superior ; for the worth of a man will always be ruled by that of his company." Of this truth Lord Brooke, an eminent Elizabethan statesman, was so convinced, that he caused it to be inscribed on his tombstone, as his lasting eulogium and epitaph, that he was "the friend of Sir Philip Sidney." The poet of "The Night Thoughts," in his usual sententious way, observes :—

" First on thy friend deliberate with thyself ;
Pause, ponder, sift ; not eager in the choice,
Nor jealous of the chosen ; fixing, fix ;—
Judge before friendship, then confide till death."

Ay ! judge before friendship ; make sure that your choice is judicious and well founded. Such a friend as John Sterling, the poet, of whom it has been said that "it was impossible to come in contact with his noble nature without feeling one's self in some measure *ennobled*, and *lifted up* into a higher region of objects and aims than that in which one is tempted habitually to dwell ;" such a friend will infuse a new meaning, a

purpose, into your life. Such a friend will know how to censure your faults, how to reprove your follies, how to encourage you in well-doing, and strengthen you against temptation. "As a true friend," says Bishop Hall, "is the sweetest contentment in the world, so in his qualities he well resembleth honey, the sweetest of all liquors. Nothing is more sweet to the taste, nothing more sharp and cleansing, where it meets with an exulcerate state. For myself, I know that I have faults, and therefore I care not for that friend that I never smart by. For my friends, I know they cannot be faultless; and therefore, as they shall find me sweet in their praises and encouragements, so sharp in their censure. Either let them abide me no friend to their faults or no friend to themselves." Do not fall into the delusion of supposing that the boy who toadies you, who applauds everything you do and say, who fetches and carries for you, is your friend: he is your worst enemy. In *true* friendship there will always be an element of frank criticism; the friend will also be your judge. Thinking of the companions of his boyhood, the faithful friends who did not spare the necessary rod, Robert Pollok, the young Scotch poet,—he was only twenty-eight when he died,—was inspired with one of the tenderest passages in his "Course of Time:"—

" Much beautiful, and excellent, and fair
 Was seen beneath the sun ; but nought was seen
 More beautiful, or excellent, or fair
 Than face of faithful friend—fairest when seen
 In darkest day ; and many sounds were sweet,
 Most ravishing and pleasant to the ear ;
 But sweeter none than voice of faithful friend—
 Sweet always, sweetest heard in loudest storm.
 Some I remember, and will ne'er forget ;
 My early friends, friends of my evil day,
 Friends given by God in mercy and in love,
 My counsellors, my comforters, my guides. . . .
 Oh, I remember, and will ne'er forget,
 Our meeting spot, our chosen sacred hours,
 Our burning words that uttered all the soul ! . . .
 As birds of social feather helping each
 His fellow's flight, we soared into the skies,
 And cast the clouds beneath our feet, and earth,
 With all her tardy leaden-footed cares,
 And talked the speech and ate the food of Heaven ! "

Friends such as these are not to be lightly parted with. We

must grapple them to our hearts with "hooks of steel," and not allow our union to be sundered by temporary disagreements, by irritable feelings, or the whispers of calumny. The sincerity of our friendship will be proved by the candour with which we listen to our friend's reproofs. Happily, as it is said that the quarrels of lovers are the renewal of love, so may it be said that the quarrels of schoolboys are the confirmation of their friendship.

A very true and touching picture of a schoolboy friendship is drawn by Dickens in his "*David Copperfield*;" and the feelings with which David looked up to the bold and brilliant Steerforth (he might, however, have chosen a better friend!) are just those which every boy cherishes towards the "superior being" whom he has elevated on the pedestal of his adoration, to whom he seems to be bound by ties that not even death itself can break, in whom he has garnered up all his aspirations, desires, and hopes. "I heard," says Copperfield, "that Miss Creakle was regarded by the school in general as being in love with Steerforth; and I am sure, as I sat in the dark, thinking of his nice voice, and his fine face, and his easy manner, and his curling hair, I thought it very likely. . . . She was a person of great power in my eyes; that was, of course, the reason of my mind running on him. . . . To see Steerforth walk to church before us, arm-in-arm with Miss Creakle, was one of the great sights of my life. When Steerforth, in white trousers, carried her parasol for her, I felt proud to know him; and believed that she could not choose but adore him with all her heart. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mell were both notable personages in my eyes, but Steerforth was to them what the sun was to the stars. There was an ease in his manner—a gay and light manner it was, but not swaggering—which I still believe to have borne a kind of enchantment with it. I still believe him, in virtue of this carriage, his animal spirits, his delightful voice, his handsome face and figure, and, for aught I know, of some inborn power of attraction besides (which I think a few people possess), to have carried a spell with him to which it was a natural weakness to yield, and which not many persons could withstand. . . . I pass over all that happened at school until the anniversary of my birthday came round. Except that Steerforth was more to be admired than ever, I remember nothing. He was going away at the

end of the half-year, if not sooner, and was more spirited and independent than before in my eyes, and therefore more engaging than before; but beyond this I remember nothing."

Similes similibus is not an axiom that can be safely applied to boyish friendships. On the contrary, I have observed that the weak, as is only natural, turn towards the strong, and the grave towards the light-spirited; while the bold, intrepid, and resolute senior will be found to take under his protection and receive into his heart of hearts the feeble, trembling, ailing junior. One of the warmest and most beautiful friendships I ever knew existed between two lads of the most opposite dispositions. Robinson was a gay, bright, daring, dashing boy, with a passion for out-of-door games and all kinds of manly exercises; Jones, a shy, quiet, contemplative bookworm, who winced if a cricket-ball came near him as if it had been a cannon-shot, and was never so happy as when pondering over his Cicero or Euripides. You would have thought there was nothing in common between the two, and yet they were inseparable. The one knew as little of Latin and Greek as the other of football or gymnastics; and we used to wonder what subjects of conversation two persons so utterly dissimilar could possibly discover. But there was the fact—a most generous, tenacious, and enduring friendship, which gave to the life of each a new value, and waxed stronger and heartier every day. We called them "Castor and Pollux" and "Damon and Pythias," and we were certainly justified in bestowing upon them any names which could typify and illustrate the deep devotion of their attachment—Jones, the scholar, though he had not the slightest liking for athletic pursuits, being about the playground all the time Robinson was batting or fielding or playing football; and Robinson, the athlete, though he had a horror of books and an incapacity for learning, hung about Jones's study until that studious youth finished his lessons for the day.

"At school," says Lord Beaconsfield, "friendship is a passion. It entrances the being; it tears the soul. All loves of after life can never bring its rapture or its wretchedness; no bliss is so absorbing, no pangs of jealousy or despair (are) so crushing and so keen. What tenderness and what devotion; what illimitable confidence, infinite revelations of inmost thoughts; what ecstatic present and romantic future,

what bitter estrangements and what melting reconciliations ; what scenes of wild recrimination, agitating explanations, passionate correspondence ; what insane sensitiveness and what frantic sensibility ; what earthquakes of the heart and whirlwinds of the soul are confined in that simple phrase—a schoolboy's friendship ! 'Tis some indefinite recollection of these mystic passages of their young emotion that makes grey-haired men mourn over the memory of their schoolboy days. It is a spell that can soften the acerbity of political warfare, and with its witchery can call forth a sigh even amid the callous bustle of fashionable saloons."

With an accurate touch, the author of "Coningsby" traces the growth of a warm friendship between his hero and another of his characters, Oswald Millbank. The secret of the latter's life was a passionate admiration and affection for Coningsby, though as yet the two had never been companions, except in school or in some public game. Millbank fed in silence on a cherished idea. He *was* happy because he was in the same form, and sometimes joined in the same sport ; happier when occasionally thrown into contact with his idol, and exchanging with him a few slight and not unkind words. "In their division they were rivals. Millbank sometimes triumphed, but to be vanquished by Coningsby was for him not without a degree of wild satisfaction. Not a gesture, not a phrase from Coningsby, that he did not watch and ponder over and treasure up. Coningsby was his model, alike in studies, in manners, or in pastimes ; the aptest scholar, the gayest wit, the most graceful associate, the most accomplished playmate ; his standard of the excellent." At last the two were thrown together by an accident. It fell to Coningsby's lot to rescue Millbank from drowning, and thenceforward gratitude mingled with the latter's admiration. He wrote to him a letter, from which we must make an extract :—

"DEAR CONINGSBY,—I very much fear that you must think me a very ungrateful fellow, because you have not heard from me before ; but I was in hopes that I might get out and say to you what I feel ; but whether I speak or write, it is quite impossible for me to make you understand the feelings of my heart to you. Now, I will say at once that I have always liked you better than any fellow in the school, and always thought you the cleverest ; indeed, I always thought that there was no

one like you ; but I never would say this or show this, because you never seemed to care for me, and because I was afraid you would think I merely wanted to con with you, as they used to say of some other fellows, whose names I will not mention. I do not want this at all ; but I want, though we may not speak to each other more than before, that we may be friends ; and that you will always know that there is nothing I will not do for you, and that I like you better than any fellow at Eton."

Need I say that they *did* become friends, and friends united by a deep and permanent bond of affection ?

Coningsby, as depicted by his creator, is just the lad to gather around him a golden circle of friendships. Boys are great hero-worshippers, and are easily impressed by fine manners, a bright gay bearing, a generous disposition, and a ready courage. In truth, any kind of superiority *tells* upon them ; and they respect and admire, though with more reserve and in a different manner, the industrious scholar not less than the dashing brilliant fellow, who carries everything before him by dint of his animal spirits and superabundant energy. Let us glance for a moment at George Champion, the cock of Dr. Birch's school, as presented to us by William Makepeace Thackeray, and we shall see in him just the kind of hero to conquer the admiration and win the hearty suffrages of his schoolfellows.

"I can't but think how great, how generous, how magnanimous a creature this is, that sits quite quiet and good-natured, and works his equation, and ponders through his Greek play. He might take the schoolroom pillars and pull the house down if he liked. He might close the door, and demolish every one of us, like Antur, the lover of Ibla ; but he lets us live. He never thrashes anybody without a cause ; when woe betide the tyrant or the sneak !

"I think that to be strong and able to whop everybody—(not to do it, mind you, but to feel that you were able to do it)—would be the greatest of all gifts. There is a serene good-humour which plays about George Champion's broad face, which shows the consciousness of this power, and lights up his honest blue eyes with a magnanimous calm.

"He is *invictus*. Even when a cub there was no beating this lion. Six years ago the undaunted little warrior actually *stood up to Frank Davison*, then seventeen years old, and the

cock of Birch's. They were obliged to drag off the boy; and Frank, with admiration and regard for him, prophesied the great things he would do. Legends of combats are preserved fondly in schools; they have stories of such at Rodwell Regis, performed in the old Doctor's time, forty years ago.

"Champion's affair with the young Tutbury Pet, who was down here in training—with Black the bargeman—with the three head boys of Dr. Wapshot's academy, whom he caught maltreating an outlying day-boy of ours,—are known to all the Rodwell Regis men. He was always victorious. He is modest and kind, like all great men. He has a good, brave, honest understanding. He cannot make verses like young Pinder, or read Greek like Wells the Prefect, who is a perfect young abyss of learning, and knows enough to furnish any six first-class men; but he does his work in a sound downright way, and he is made to be the bravest of soldiers, the best of country parsons, an honest English gentleman wherever he may go."

To those who hold to the natural wickedness of boys as an article of belief, we may here point out that bad boys are almost invariably friendless. They may have their tools, or their slaves, but they have no friends. Honest boyhood instinctively avoids them. It is otherwise in the world, where men are found to consort with "sneaks" and "bullies" and "braggarts," with mean and contemptible creatures, who, in every well-conducted school, would be "cold-shouldered" almost unanimously. Boys are not so fettered by conventionalities as men; they call a spade by its proper name; and they are not afraid to show their repugnance to dishonourable conduct. To form and maintain a lasting friendship, you must be able to present a tolerably clean record, must possess a character for straightforwardness and truthfulness. I think that very few boys will condescend to clasp hands with any whose names are inscribed on that mysterious, unwritten, but well-known "Black List," which Public Opinion draws up in every place where boys do congregate.





CHAPTER VII.

THE BOY IN THE COUNTRY.

"Let me alone to my idle pleasure ;
What do I care for toil or treasure ?
To-morrow I'll work, if work you crave,
Like a king, a statesman, or a slave ;
But not to-day—ah no ! . . .
Under the leaves, amid the grass,
Lazily the day shall pass,
Yet not be wasted."

—CHARLES MACKAY.

Boys' delight in a country life—Their winter amusements—Skating—Sleighing—Curling—Snowballing—The great "snow-bicker of Pidmount"—A digression upon fighting—The coming of spring—Spring flowers—A song of spring—Going a-violeting—The trees put on their foliage—Angling—The bluebell—The lily of the valley—The cowslip—A song of May—May blossoms—June—Haymaking—Roses—Harvesting—Harvest home—Nutting—Miss Mitford's description—Black-berrying—Advance of autumn—Hips and haws—Mushrooms—Ferns and fern-gathering—Boys at the seaside—Their various pastimes—The fishing-boats—The Mayor of Plymouth and the lobster—Down by the sea—Boys at the seashore—Coming of winter—Intellectual pastime for winter evenings—A new version of an old play—A story from Ben Jonson—Christmas come again—A Christmas scene—Private theatricals—Getting up a "drawing-room performance"—"The Sleeping Beauty"—An apology for the home drama—Christmas as it was—Scott quoted—Christmas as it is—The boys at Christmas—An address to Christmas—Concluding suggestions—Boyhood's memories.

GENERALISATIONS, like definitions, are dangerous ; but I will venture on *one* generalisation, to which I think no exception can be taken, and that is :—Boys are nowhere so happy as in the country.

A healthy, high-spirited boy, with abundant energy and a keen faculty of enjoyment, with sharp eyes, ready hands, and nimble feet, always seems to me as much out of place in a crowded, smoky, airless city as a lion in a cage, or Dr. Blimber in a toffy-shop. He is not fully himself except when his foot is on his native heather : when he is paddling in the clear, cold burnie, angling in the woodland pool, hunting for blackberries in green lanes, scaling old mossy walls in quest of the nest with the young owlets in it, or groping for crabs among the weedy rocks. There, indeed, he stands revealed in all his fulness of daring and exuberance of mirth ; good-humoured, lively, heedless of danger, frank of speech, ready of resource. Take a street Arab, born and bred amid the hum of men and in the shadow of dusky streets ; place him on the sea-shore or in the heart of the woods, and observe how sudden and strange a transformation he undergoes. His preternatural shrewdness, his old-world look, his precocious mannishness, pass away as rapidly as the pallor of his complexion. Like Æson boiled in Medea's caldron, he becomes young again. The rind and crust of premature age falls off him, and he renews his free and joyous boyhood. And you will see that boys whose early years have been spent among the sights and sounds of the country, with the wholesome breeze playing in their hair, and their young lungs invigorated by the blithe rural atmosphere, are ever so much more *boyish* than their compeers of the town. They retain their juvenility longer. They don't develop into "young men" at sixteen, and wear the gloom of a misanthropical experience of life at eighteen. They are not ashamed of being boys ; they don't adopt all kinds of ingenious expedients to make their boyhood pass as young-man-hood. No, happy creatures ! The fields and the lanes are theirs, and the green woods and the hawthorn hedges ; the solemn hill-tops are theirs, and the shining streams and the broad meadows, and the cornfields with the ripeness of the harvest upon them ; hazel-nuts are theirs, and jetty blackberries, and the produce of prolific orchards ; the songs of the birds are theirs, and the

hum of the grasshopper, and the murmur of honey-laden bees. O happy country boys! cling to your boyhood, cling to its pleasant pastimes, to its innocent enjoyments. Believe me, in all your later life you will never again partake of pleasures so manly and so pure.

The pleasures of the country boy begin with the beginning of the year. When the earth lies hidden beneath its shroud of snow, and the glittering frost begems the leafless branches; when the redwing and the fieldfare are sore straitened for want of food; when the robin grows familiar, and comes to the window or the open door for the dole dealt out by friendly hands; when the whiteness of the meadows is strangely spotted here and there by the shadows of rooks and starlings speeding abroad on their daily foraging expeditions; when the drifts lie deep in the narrow lanes, and are heaped high above the hedge-tops;—then he sets forth, on pastime bent, to seek the nearest pond, where, on the hard frozen surface, he and his mates skate to and fro with untiring vigour, while every echo resounds with their ringing laughter. Then, as evening draws near, he doffs his skates, slings them across his shoulder, and prepares for the homeward journey, amid a volley of snowballs discharged by skilful hands. Nothing loth, he accepts the challenge, and, until his arms ache and his frame is all aglow, keeps up an energetic cannonade. At last, the dusky twilight beginning to deepen into night, he and his comrades cease the mimic battle, and, shouting and singing, return to their respective homes, stopping, perhaps, on the way to chat for a minute or two with the village blacksmith, from whose forge a ruddy glare falls across the whitened road.

Nor is this all. The "cold" continuing, and the snow freezing hard, our boy seizes on an old box, which he fixes upon a couple of wooden runners, and in this impromptu sleigh or sledge down the slippery incline he rushes at an ever-increasing pace. Sleighing has grown more popular with English and Scottish boys of recent years, but it has never attained to such extensive favour here as it enjoys in the more Northern countries or in Western Europe.

In Holland, the peasants skate to market along the frozen canals, frequently accomplishing thirty miles in three hours, with a burden of seventy to eighty pounds on their heads. In Lapland and Sweden, as in Canada, the boys—ay! and adults also

—mount their sledges or *tobogans*, and dash down the hills at a tremendous pace. Sledging parties are often organised on a large scale, ladies and gentlemen, thickly cased in furs, driving magnificent sledges, with countless bells jingling and jangling about the trapping of their horses as they sweep along. These excursions are sometimes made at night, and then the picturesque aspect of the scene is enhanced by numerous torch-bearers, whose flickering lights burn eerily against the darkness.

While the frost lasts, our boy may take part, either as spectator or player, in the good old Scotch game of curling, which, for the benefit of the uninitiated, we may describe as bowling upon ice. Instead of the round bowls, however, flattened flint stones are used. The game is played by two parties ranged in good-humoured rivalry, each man being provided with a broom to keep the icy surface clear, and a pair of handled stones, while stout iron crampits are attached to his feet to prevent him from coming down with a crash. The purpose of the game is to have as many stones as possible lying near a fixed point at the end of the course, called a *tee*. When a player fails to hurl his stone with sufficient impetus, his associates hastily sweep in front of it to assist its lagging motion. Meanwhile the *skip* or leader of each party stands at the tee, broom in hand, and directs his men what to attempt or avoid, how to force an open channel through the cluster of stones accumulating round the tee, or to drive headlong in among them with the view of distributing them more to the advantage of his side.

Snowballing is sometimes conducted by the boys on a grand scale. Perhaps those of one school or village challenge those of another, and a regular attack and defence is organised, with squads detached to make up and supply the glittering ammunition, reserves posted in advantageous positions, and a general imitation of the "pomp and circumstance of war." The reader will remember that the great Napoleon, when a military cadet at Brienne, first displayed his tactical skill as leader in a snow fight, marshalling his soldiers with consummate ability, throwing up snow entrenchments of a formidable character, from which he repulsed every assault of the enemy. The present writer, in the well-remembered days of his happy youth, shared in many an exciting contest of this character, and well does he recollect the ardour of the combatants, the shouts of the victorious, and the sighs of the defeated. And he ventures to say that it

needs a good deal of heroism to face unflinching a volley of well-kneaded snowballs !

There is a famous account of a snow-fight, or, as the Scotch call it, a "snow-bicker," in the "Recreations of Christopher North."

In this famous bicker, the contending parties were the dominie, with a certain Bob Howie as his lieutenant, and the six stoutest lads, on the one side, and Christopher North at the head of the whole school on the other. The latter host came down in battle array, with shouts that might waken the dead, while skirmishers, flung out in front, began the conflict by a shower of balls that, from the bosom of the yet untrodden snow between the two battles, made the shining surface spin like spray. Then falling back on the main body, they found their places in the front rank, and the whole mottled mass, grey, blue, and scarlet, moved forward over the frozen whiteness—

"Calm as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm."

"Let fly," cried a clear voice ; and the snowball storm hurtled through the air. Just then the valley-mouth blew sleety in the faces of the foe ; their eyes blinked bat-like, and with wandering and irregular aim they vainly returned the shower of frosty fire. Incessant the shining cannonade of the resistless school ; silent, save when triumphant shouts proclaimed the fall or flight of some doughty champion in the adverse legion. The dominie's band was broken. Ignominiously the cravens took to flight, leaving the dominie and Bob Howie alone to bear the brunt of battle. A dreadful brotherhood ! But the crashing balls were showered upon them right and left from scores of catapultic arms, and the day was going against them, though they fought less like men than heroes. Hurra ! down went the dominie, and even Bob staggered. "Guards ! up and at them !" "A simultaneous charge of cocks, hens, and carrots." Bob Howie was buried, and the whole school trampling on its master !

" Oh, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died ! "



The smothered roar of Bob and the stifled denunciation of the dominie echoed over the hill, and

"Fierce as ten furies,"

the runaways, shaking the snows of panic from their paws,

"Like dewdrops from the lion's mane,"

rushed to the rescue. Two of the six thought better of it, and turned again. The high heroic scorn of their former selves urged four to renew the contest, and the sound of their feet on the snow was like that of an earthquake. What bashes on bleeding noses! What bungings-up of eyes! Of lips what slittings! And as the coughing urchin groaned, and clapped his hand to his mouth, distained was the snowball that dropped unlaunched at his feet. The school was broken, their hearts died within them; they showed the white feather; they fled! O shame! O sorrow! O sin! They turned their backs and fled. Heavens and earth! sixty fled before six! and half of sixty—oh, that we should record it—pretended to be dead!

"Look, we beseech you, at the dominie! Like Hector issuing from the gates of Troy and driving back the Greeks to their ships, or rather—hoary spirit of Homer!—like some great shaggy, outlandish wolf-dog, that hath swum ashore from some strange wreck, and, after a fortnight's famine on the bare sea-cliffs, been driven by the hunger that gnaws his stomach like a cancer, and the thirst-fever that can only be slaked in blood, to venture prowling for prey up the vale, till, snuffing the scent of a flock of sheep, after some grim tiger-like creeping on his belly, he springs at last, with huge long springs, on the woolly people, with hell-like growlings quailing their poor harmless hearts, and then fast throttling them one after another, till as it might seem rather in wantonness of rage than in empty pangs, he lies down at last in the midst of all the murdered carcasses, licking the blood off his jaws and paws, and then looking and listening round with his red turbid eyes and sharp-pointed ears savagely erect, conscious of crime and fearful of punishment, soon as he hears and sees that all the coast is clear and still, again gloatingly fastens his tusks behind the ears, and then eats into the kidneys of the best of the flock, till sated with gore and tallow, he sneaks stealthily into the wood, and, coiling himself up all his wiry

length—now no longer lank, but swollen and knotted like that of a deer-devouring snake—he falls suddenly asleep, and re-banquets in a dream of murder.

“That simile was conceived in the spirit of Dan Homer, but delivered in that of Kit North. No matter. Like two such wolf-dogs are now Bob Howie and the mad dominie, and the school like such silly sheep. Those other hell-dogs are leaping in the rear; and to the eyes of fear and flight each one of the six seems more many-headed than Cerberus, while their mouths kindle the frosty air into fire, and thunderbolts pursue the pell-mell of the panic.”

Such and so imaginative is bodily as well as mental fear. Meanwhile the bicker continued. The air was darkened, or rather brightened, by the balls, which described their airy flight in many a graceful curve; some hard as stones, some soft as slush; some almost transparent in the clear blue sky, and broken before they reached their aim; and some useless from the first, and felt, as they left the palm, to be softer than the rottenest turnip, and unfit to “bash a fly.”

Far and wide, over hill, bank, and brae, scattered the flying school. Squads of sixes and sevens made for the covert of the frozen woods. Twos and threes floundered miserably in the snow-drifts. And here and there—saddest sight of all!—single boys distractedly making for the sanctuaries of distant homes, with their heads twisted back over their shoulders, till, souse over neck and ears, with many a cry, they dashed into some traitorous pitfall, and lay buried deep in slush and snow.

“But who is he—the tall slender boy—slender, but sinewy—a wiry chap, five feet eight in his stocking-soles, who plants himself like an oak sapling rooted ankle-deep on a knoll, and there, a juvenile Jupiter Stator, with voice and arm arrests the flight, and fiercely gesticulating vengeance on the insolent foe, recalls and rallies the shattered school that he may re-lead them to victory?”

This was no other than young Kit North himself.

At length both sides gave way; an armistice was called, and Kit North advanced into the debateable ground between the two armies with a frozen branch waving in his hand as a flag of truce. He was received with open arms by the *dominie* and Bob Howie; but his blood was up, he was

jealous of the honour of the school ; it had received a stain which he felt could be wiped out only in blood. In the deeds deemed most heroic and thought worthy of eternal fame, men (and boys) have always been actuated by mixed motives ; and so was it now with Christopher, as, sternly confronting the six, and then turning respectfully to the dominie, he challenged, toe to toe, at the scratch on the snow, with naked fists, the brawny red, shock-headed boy, the villain "with the carrots," who by moonlight night is fain—

"Round the stacks with the lasses at bogles to play,"

had audaciously interfered between him and the ladye of his love.

"Off fly our jackets and stocks—it is not a day for buff—and at it like bulldogs. Twice before had we fought him at our own option over the bonnets ; for 'twas a sturdy villain, and famous for the cross-buttock. But now, after the first close, in which we lose the fall, with straight right-handers we keep him at off-fighting—and that was a gush of blood from his smeller. 'How do you like that, Ben ?' Giving his head, with a mad rush he makes a plunge with his heavy left at our stomach. But a dip of our right elbow caught the blow, to the loud admiration of Bob Howie, and even the dominie, the umpire, could not choose but smile. Like lightning, our left returns between the ogles, and Ben bites the snow. Three cheers from the school, and, lifted on the knee of his second, 'he grins horribly a ghastly smile,' and is brought up staggering to the scratch. We know that we have him, and ask considerably 'What he means by winking?' And now we play around him—

'Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.'

He is brought down now to our own weight—then nine stone jimp—his eyes are getting momentarily more and more pig-like, and, bat-blind, he hits past our head and body, like an awkward hand at the flail when drunk thrashing corn. Another hit on the smeller, and a stinger on the throat-apple, and down he sinks like a poppy, deaf to the call of 'time,' and victory smiles upon us from the bright blue skies. 'Hurra—hurra—hurra ! Christopher for ever !' and perched

aloft, astride on the shoulders of Bob Howie, he, the Invincible, gallops with us all over the field, followed by the shouting school, exulting that Ben the Bully has at last met with an overthrow. We exact an oath that he will never again meddle with Meg Whitelaw, shake hands cordially, and

['Off to some other game we all together flew.'

And so ended the famous Snowball Bicker of Pidmount." No doubt many of our readers could tell of fights not less spiritedly contested.

Here we may interpose a word or two on pugilistic encounters. We fancy boys do not make so much use of their fists as was formerly the case, and we shall rejoice if our impression be correct. We are no advocates of fighting; blows are the worst kind of argument to which men or boys can resort. Still there are times when a lad must fight in self-defence, or in defence of the weak, or, at all events, must be *ready* to fight. Bullies and sneaks and the lads who swear and use indecent language must be punished; and it is often better that they should be punished in the time-honoured fashion by their own comrades than by their masters. All that can be said is this: Do not be in a hurry to engage in a fight, but once involved, demean yourself with courage and courtesy. Don't fight if you are in the wrong; it is braver and wiser to own your error; but if you are in the right, and you can see no other honourable means of settling your quarrel, stand up gallantly, and don't give in so long as you can see. Here is Mr. Thomas Hughes's advice:—"As to fighting, keep out of it, if you can by all means. When the time comes, if it ever should, that you have to say 'Yes' or 'No' to a challenge to fight, say 'No,' if you can—only take care you make it clear to yourselves why you say 'No.' It's a proof of the highest courage if done from true Christian motives. It's quite right and justifiable if done from a simple aversion to physical pain and danger. But don't say 'No' because you fear a licking, and say or think it's because you fear God, for that's neither Christian nor honest. And if you do fight, fight it out, and don't give in while you can stand and see." To which we may add the warning given by the poet Butler:—

"They who in quarrels interpose
Are apt to get a bloody nose."

But gradually the chill presence of winter passes away from the earth. Our boy, as he takes his accustomed daily ramble, becomes conscious of a fresh greenness in the hedges and the trees ; not that they have as yet assumed their glorious garb of verdant foliage, but that they are putting forth their leaf-buds, and making ready for the warmer days to come. The sap is stirring in their veins ; they are awakening from their long and dreary sleep. The woodlark, one of the earliest of British songsters, pipes forth a cheery strain ; the thrush soon commences his bursts of melody, and the hedge-sparrow chirps in the bright intervals of sunshine. Now the rooks return to their breeding-places, and in solemn conclave fix upon the stations of their future nests. Partridges begin to pair, and tomtits make their appearance about our barns. All these signs the boy notes with intense delight, for though winter has been to him a merry season, he shares in the general yearning of nature for the life and vigour of spring. The days lengthen, and lo ! in the hedges the hazel catkins whiten, and the flower-buds come out upon the branching elder. March arrives, and before its brief reign is at an end winter takes leave of us reluctantly. In the boy's little garden Spring scatters her first gifts—the delicate alpine violet, the hyacinth, the golden daffodil, the forest daisy. Among the leafless trees stands conspicuous the almond in its robe of snow-white blossoms. On sunny banks the wildflowers wake up one by one, and the daisy sparkles everywhere with kindly eye. Violets, sweet violets, bloom modestly beneath the hedgerows ; the star of Bethlehem glows in the heart of the green coppice ; the moist meadows rejoice in cardamine and coltsfoot, and the golden kingcup and the celandine are found in sheltered places. Emerging from the security of their hives, the busy bees rejoice that the winter is past and gone. All nature is alive and in motion. The ringdove coos in the wood, and the pheasants crow in the ferny copse ; the linnet and the goldfinch blend their sweet strains with those of the thrush ; and the lark, high up in the luminous air, pours forth a strain of music which fills with joy every listener's soul. We can fancy that it is the voice of Spring, and that she sings to us some such pleasant hopeful rhymes as these :—

“ I am coming, I am coming !
Hark ! the little bee is humming ;

See, the lark is^{*}soaring high
In the blue and sunny sky,
And the gnats are on the wing,
Wheeling round in airy ring.

“ See the yellow catkins cover
All the slender willows over ;
And on banks of mossy green
Star-like primroses are seen ;
And, their clustering leaves below,
White and purple violets blow.

“ Hark ! the new-born lambs are bleating,
And the cawing rooks are meeting
In the elms—a noisy crowd !
All the birds are singing loud ;
And the first white butterfly
In the sunshine dances by.

“ Look around thee—look around !
Flowers in all the fields abound ;
Every running stream is bright ;
All the orchard trees are white ;
And each small and waving shoot
Promises both flowers and fruit.

“ Turn thine eyes to earth and heaven !
God to thee the spring has given,
Taught the birds their melodies,
Clothed the earth and cleared the skies,
For thy pleasure or thy good :—
Pour thy soul in gratitude ! ”

The boy may now go a-violeting. Let him look for a green bank facing the south, but sheltered by the waving branches of the palms. In such a spot he will find a wealth of delicate flowers enamelling the crisp dewy grass with their white and purple bloom. Or down in the quiet dell, where the brook trails its slow waters through the tufted and feathery herbage, he will see them in hundreds and thousands, some still in their tiny green buds, others with their blossoms fully open. Next he will hunt for primroses, most beautiful, as I think, of all the flowers of spring, and by the mossy roots of ancient trees, and beneath the hawthorn clumps, and on the grass sloping sides of shady dingles, they greet him with their petals of pale gold. Not a day now but brings with it a fresh charm

and nothing escapes the quick eye of the country boy, accustomed to watch every sign and mark of the advancing year. He knows when the elm puts on its first show of green; he notes the leafing of the ash, always the last to come and the first to go; he rejoices when the long finger-shaped leaves of the chestnut break through the round and viscous buds, and the gnarled boughs of the oak slowly assume their garniture of red buds and bright metallic-looking leaves. He observes the delicate greenness of the foliage of the lime, and the emerald-like tint of that of the smooth-trunked beech. He is the first to detect the golden blossoms of the laburnum, which hang in thick, graceful clusters, like "dropping wells of fire;" and pleasant to his eye is the gorgeous decoration of the orchard, when the cherry-tree puts out its snow-white bloom, and the apple-blossoms peep out of their delicious drapery, like nymphs blushing at their own loveliness.

Most country boys, or boys in the country, are disciples of Izaak Walton, and whether they are equipped with rod and line from the best makers, or carry no better tool than a stick with a piece of twine attached to it and a bent pin for hook, they hail the April month with delight, because it enables them to resume their pursuit of the speckled and spotted denizens of the waters. With flies trimmed by their own dexterous fingers, they woo the nimble trout and the shy carp; and many of them in a couple of hours will land as many fish as our town-bred angler in a day. But even if they have little "sport," they may enjoy themselves rarely on a warm, sunny day in April, while the air is still fragrant with the breath of spring. As they follow the course of the winding stream—

"Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle and foaming wear;
Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings"—

they will enter upon a succession of fair or picturesque scenes. They will pass through wood and meadow land and cornfield, by thorp and burn, and under the stone bridge that carries the dusty highroad across the stream where once the peasant forded it afoot, and below the hill on the crest of which stands the village church surrounded by its silent graves. They will

come to green banks all aglow with primroses, and to damp, shady places azure with the bluebell of spring. The wild hyacinth, let us note, is one of our earliest flowers, and the country boys insert it in their posies along with the violet, the daisy, and the cowslip. Observe that the folded bells are of a deeper blue than those recently opened, and mark how gracefully the latter droop, so as to show the tops of their fairy cups turning backward. They will also come to sheltered recesses where the graceful lily of the valley blooms in its shy beauty. "How elegantly its white ivory-looking bells rise, tier above tier, to the very summit of the flower-stalk, while the two broad leaves which protect it seem placed there for its support! They who have inhaled the perfume from a whole bed of these lilies in some open forest glade can fancy what odours were wafted through Eden in the golden mornings of the early world." They will also come to patches of old pasture, where the grass is short and close, and there they will find a profuse sprinkling of "cinque-spotted" cowslips, the separate flowers or petals of which are picked by the country children to make cowslip wine. And lastly, in the course of their ramble, our anglers may gather handfuls of the great marsh marigold and of the cuckoo-flower—Shakespeare's "lady's-smock, all silver white"—so that when the day is done they will return home laden with floral honours, like a Roman hero marching in triumphal procession to the Capitol.

But May is here; the day is warm and bright. Our boys' spirits rise to their topmost height in sympathy with the joy of the landscape, which grows visibly richer every hour. The plum-blossoms fall like a shower of snow; the pear-trees are changed each into a pyramid of blossom; and bright against the deep foliage of elm and beech and chestnut shines the tender green of the shapely larch. The wild cherries have broken out into flower; in the garden, rockets, purple and white, are gay to see, and beautiful is the blue of the grape-hyacinth. "Tulips and anemones of many rich hues abound. The wallflowers in the cottage gardens beam like rich masses of gold, and delicious is their spicy odour. The primroses still continue their welcome bloom in the commons, which, scattered with oaks and rich with thickets in which hundreds of nightingales are singing, are like tracts of old fairy forest. The cuckoo is heard on all hands. The grasses grow deep.

The pools and streams are quite white with the water-ranunculus. The foxglove leaves are springing firm and green in the woods and on banks. Numbers of insects are frisking about, and visiting the flowers or humming over the warm ground. The red, black-spotted butterfly is out, alighting and basking in the warm dust of the highway or the footpath before you, elevating and depressing its wings, as if drinking in at every pore the sunshine as the spirit of life."

" May has come, but soon will pass,
With a fleet foot, o'er the grass ;
With a fleet foot through the bowers,
Scattering as she goes the flowers.

" In the hedge the hawthorn white,
In the field the poppy bright,
Bluebells 'neath the arching trees,
Yellow bloom to woo the bees.

" May has come, and every voice
In the woodlands will rejoice ;
Thrushes sing a jocund strain,
Nightingales their love complain.

" Long the invisible cuckoo
Will his minor sad renew,
Ceaselessly himself proclaim,
Till every echo knows his name.

" May has come, and May will go
While the warm laburnums blow,
Ere the chestnut's clustering flowers
Fall in broken, rosy showers.

" May has come with lilac bloom,
Honeysuckle's rich perfume,
Waving ferns and grasses fine,
Pansy and columbine.

" May has come with happy dreams,
Song of birds and voice of streams,
Bud and bloom and joyousness,
All sweet things the heart to bless.

" May has come, but soon, alas !
Into shadow-land will pass :—
Only in the poet's lay
Can the year be one long day !

"Only in the loving heart
Will the Maytime ne'er depart !
There its presence will delay,
Though birds and flowers have lost *their* May !"

With June comes the haymaking season, and then the boy for a while suspends his cricket games, and bursts into the hay-field, where he rakes up the new-mown grass and piles it in little heaps of fragrance, or rides on the top of the hay-waggon, and climbs to the summit of the "rick," and makes himself generally useful and useless ! With June comes our English summer, and our gardens redden all over with roses, reminding us of many a delicate poetic fancy and antique legend : of the love-lorn poetess Sappho, and how the roses were always white, until, presuming to rival her exquisitely fair complexion, they failed egregiously, and blushing for shame at their defeat, have ever since held the blush fixed upon their cheek ; of Chaucer's Emilie, gathering roses in her bower, and thrusting among the thorns her little hand ; of Milton's Eve in Eden, standing half-concealed by a cloud of bloom, "so thick the blushing roses round about her blew ;" of Tennyson's "Gardener's Daughter," who, among her roses shone "a rose in June." This is the very heyday of the country boy's enjoyment. He has his "bathe" and "swim" every summer morning, if lake or stream be near at hand ; he plays cricket in the afternoons ; he goes long walks to far-off villages ; he mounts his pony, and rides away, like the young Lochinvar, "o'er bush and o'er scaur ;" he has his boating expeditions and his picnics ; and on fine days, when not at lessons, he spends almost every moment in the sunny air, drinking in a potent elixir of youthful energy and vivacity. He will go anywhere and is ready for anything. A rat-hunt in the old barn or a bell-ringing in the old church, he is willing for either. To construct a rabbit-hutch, or go in search of some uncommon bird's nest, or take a turn at lawn-tennis, or rake the garden beds (to the terror of the gardener), you will find him neither *invitus* nor *imparatus*.

In due time comes harvesting. Though the steam-engine has now made its descent upon our cornfields, still in many parts of the country the sickle retains its sway ; and in later August, when the wheat is brown in the sun, the reaper grasps his old familiar implement, and, with many a sturdy stroke, fells the

rich grain in close ripe swathes before him. It has been well said that there is no month more glorious than August—the harvest month. It is a time of serene splendour and tranquil maturity. The air is bland; bright with a warm lustre the firmament, its deep rich blue enhanced by contrast with passing clouds of silver white. Full, luxuriant, and as yet untouched by decay the foliage; the hayfields, mown in June and July, thrive again with succulent grasses, on which the drowsy cattle feed content. “There is a sort of second spring in trees, the oak and the elm especially putting forth new shoots of a lighter tint. The hedges put on the same vernal-looking hue; and the heather on the moors, and scabiouses, blue chicory, and large white convolvulus, hawkweeds, honeysuckles, and the small blue campanula, make the fields gay.” But nowhere is August so beautiful as in the wheatfield or “all among the barley.” The tall stalks and golden ears, swelling and sinking like waves beneath the ripple of the wind, make a pleasant picture; and pleasant, too, is the sight of the precious sheaves, piled one against another, in groups of three or four, over the stubble-field; and pleasant to hear are the shouts and laughter of men, women, and children when the “last load” is carried, and the harvest-home rivalry begins.

“Who has not paused,” says Thomas Miller, “to see the high-piled waggons come rocking over the furrowed fields and sweeping through the green lanes at the leading-home of harvest? All the village turns out to see the last load carried into the rickyard: the toothless old grandmother in spectacles stands at her cottage-door; the poor old labourer, who has been long ailing, and who will never more help to reap the harvest, leans on his stick in the sunshine; while the feeble huzzas of the children mingle with the deep-chested cheers of the men and the silvery ring of maiden voices, all welcoming home the last load with cheery voices, especially where the farmer is respected, and has allowed his poor neighbours to glean. Some are mounted on the sheaves, and one sheaf is often decorated with flowers and ribbons—the last that was in the field; and sometimes a pretty girl sits sideways on one of the great fat horses, her straw-hat ornamented with flowers and ears of corn. Right proud she is when hailed by *the rustics as the Harvest-Queen!* Then there are the farmer, his wife, and daughters, all standing and smiling at the open

gate of the stackyard ; and proud is the driver as he cocks his hat aside, and giving the horses a slight touch, sends the last load with a sweep into the yard, that almost makes you feel afraid it will topple over, so much does it rock coming in at this grand finish. . . . What grand subjects, mellowed by the setting suns of departed centuries, do these harvest-fields bring before a picture-loving eye ! Abraham among his reapers—Jacob musing in the fields at even-tide—Jacob labouring to win Rachel—Joseph and the great granaries of Egypt—Ruth

‘ Standing in tears among the alien corn ’—

and the harvests of Palestine amid which our Saviour walked by the side of His disciples. All these scenes pass before a meditative mind while gazing over the harvest-field filled with busy reapers and gleaners, and we think how, thousands of years ago, the same picture was seen by the patriarchs, and that Ruth herself may have led David by the hand, while yet a child, through the very fields in which she herself had gleaned. But the frames in which these old pictures were placed were not carved into such beautiful park-like scenery and green pastured spots as we see in England ; for there the harvest-fields were hemmed in by rocky hills and engirded by deserts where few trees waved, and the villages lay far and wide apart ; and, instead of the sound of the thrasher's flail, oxen went treading their weary round to trample out the corn, which in spring shot up in green circles where they had trodden.”

To such considerations as these most boys, however, give little heed. They are too much occupied by external aspects. The boyish nature is not reflective. But I think they do not the less enjoy the sights and sounds of harvest-time.

Who shall attempt a description of the delights of nutting after Miss Mitford ? Her pen has pre-occupied the ground, and all later comers must fall back into the second place. Let us take her for our guide and companion on a nutting expedition this warm, bright day at the end of September, and sally forth into the merry green lanes, where the hazel boughs are full of delectable fruit. “ All is beautiful that the eye can see, perhaps the more beautiful for being shut in with fresh-like closeness. We have no prospect in this labyrinth of lanes, cross-roads, mere cartways, leading to the innumerable *little farms* into which this part of our parish is divided. Up

hill or down, these quiet woody lanes scarcely give us a peep at the world, except when, leaning over a gate, we look into one of the small enclosures, hemmed in with hedgerows so closely set with growing timber that the meady opening looks almost like a glade in a wood; or when some cottage, planted at a corner of one of the little groves formed by the meeting of these cross-ways, almost startles us by the unexpected sight of the dwellings of men in such a solitude. We come to a pretty farmhouse on the green slope of the hill; the rich vine which covers its front reaches up to the very top of the clustered chimney. Close beside it blooms the ample orchard, where the farmer and his children are now gathering in the ripe harvest. Look at that young rogue in the old mossy apple-tree—that great tree bending with the weight of its golden rennets; see how he pelts his little sister beneath with apples as red and as round as her own cheeks, while she, with her outstretched frock, is trying to catch them, and laughing and offering to pelt again as often as one bobs against her; and look at that still younger imp who, as grave as a judge, is creeping on hands and knees under the tree, picking up the apples as they fall so *decidedly*, and depositing them so honestly in the great basket on the grass, already fixed so firmly and opened so widely, and filled almost to overflowing by the brown rough fruitage of the golden rennet's next neighbour, the russeling; and see that smallest urchin of all, seated apart in infantine state on the turfy bank, with that toothsome piece of deformity a crumpling in each hand, now biting from one sweet, hard, juicy morsel and now from another. . . . And then, further up the orchard, that bold hardy lad, the eldest-born, who has scaled (Heaven knows how?) the tall, straight upper branch of that great pear-tree, and is sitting there as securely and as fearlessly, in as much real safety and apparent danger as a sailor on the topmast. How he shakes the tree with a mighty swing that brings down a pelting shower of stony bergamots, which the father gathers rapidly up, whilst the mother can hardly assist for her motherly fear—a fear which only spurs the spirited boy to bolder ventures.

“But now we strike into another lane, where the hedge shines with festoons of the periwinkle, and the little rill that has been bubbling all along the hillside begins to break into a maze of clear deep pools and channels. And now the

hedge, too, changes its charm ; it is no longer a dense green wall of hawthorn and maple and briar-roses, intertwined with bramble and woodbine, and crowned with large elms or thickly-set saplings. The pretty meadows raised above us needs no defence on our side but its own steep bank, garnished with tufts of broom, with ivy-bound pollard oaks, and at intervals with rich clusters of hazel overhanging the water. Ah, there is our coveted spoil ! We rush forward with a shout, hook down the lissome hazel stalks, and proceed like so many squirrels to strip them of their tawny nuts. Mounting the bank, we force our way into the midst of the "nutting," and transfer the booty from the lower branches into our pockets, and, when these are filled, into the bags that we have had the foresight to bring with us. And so we go on, gathering and stooping, and hauling down and scrambling—for, needless to say, nutting is scrambling work—those pliant boughs, however stoutly you may grasp them by their young fragrant twigs, *will* recoil and break away. Nutting is scrambling work, but it is splendid fun for all that."

"Oh, what enjoyment," says Miss Mitford, "this nut-gathering is ! They are in such abundance, that it seems as if there were not a boy in the parish, nor a young man, nor a young woman—for a basket of nuts is the universal habit of country gallantry ; but no one has found out these. And they are so full, too ; we lose half of them from over-ripeness ; they drop from the socket at the slightest motion. If we lose, there is one who finds. May, the dog, is as fond of nuts as a squirrel, and cracks the shell and extracts the kernel with equal dexterity. Her white glossy head is upturned now to watch them as they fall. See how her neck is thrown back like that of a swan, and how beautifully her folded ears quiver with expectation, and how her quick eye follows the rustling noise, and her light feet dance and pat the ground and leap up with eagerness, seeming almost sustained in the air. . . . See, she has caught that nut just before it touched the water ; but the water would have been no defence ; she fishes them from the bottom ; she delves after them amongst the matted grass—even my bonnet, how beggingly she looks at that ! 'Oh what a pleasure nutting is ! is it not, May ? And we must go home now, must we not ? But we will come nutting again some time or other—shall we not, my May ?'"

And day after day, until every hazel stalk is stripped bare of its toothsome produce, we go a-nutting, except, indeed, when we go a-blackberrying; and sometimes we combine both quests in one good day's work. Blackberrying is not done wholly on our own account; we have to collect sufficient store for household purposes, blackberry pudding (with apples) being a "dainty dish," and blackberry jam one of the wholesomest and pleasantest of home-made preserves. What figures we boys present as we troop along the lanes with our baskets full of the purple-dark fruit! Our faces, our hands, our clothes, are all marked with purple stains, and many a scratch and rent and tear testify to the rough usage we have received from the bramble bushes. In some parts of South-Western England the boys go in search of a delicious little wild fruit called blea- or blue-berries, resembling in size a black currant, but with a more pungent flavour. Then in Kent and Sussex they join in the hop-picking, and proud are they if permitted to strip the hop-poles of their dark brown clusters, though the hop-pickers, too frequently, are not companions with whom it is advisable for boys to mingle.

"The shortening day warns us," says William Howitt, "that we must make haste to enjoy the beauties of nature. It is glorious in nature its mid-autumn pomp. The birds are silent; we are conscious of a deep tranquillity that broods, dove-like, over the hushed landscape. But the sun beams gladly on the woods and fields, that smile back upon him as in an old and confiding affection. The blackberries hang thick on the hedges; the mushroom springs white and fresh in the green pasture; the geometric spider hangs its web on bush and tree. Never does the landscape look more attractive than now. The grass in the fields is of the deepest green; the corn is cleared from the uplands; the woods look dreamy; the streams run on in freshest brilliancy; the air is full of vigour and inspiration. You are no longer languid and oppressed with electric heat; you feel as if you must run and leap, think and love. You want hearts tuned to the joy of *your* hearts, minds overflowing with thought; you breathe in poetry, you pour out eloquence. Such is the soul of nature in the manhood of autumn. The true holiday now is to *enjoy it.*"

And the boy does enjoy it, with a fulness and an intensity of

which manhood is incapable. Blackberrying, nutting, hopping,—he enjoys them all. He enjoys apple-gathering in the orchard, and elderberry-picking in the garden hedges and the copses. He will go forth, if he have no better object, to collect a supply of hips and haws, the fruit of the wild rose. In Queen Elizabeth's days, by the bye, ladies were wont to make a conserve of these hips, which, indeed, are still used medicinally. Or he goes mushroom-gathering; though this he should never do except in the company of some experienced hand. In the autumnal woods these fungi are very beautiful; they vary in shape, and size, and hue, according to their species and the conditions under which they grow. Some are mere filaments of scarlet or bright yellow clustering upon a decaying branch; yonder, in the woody recess, stands, table-like, the bold broad agaric, about a foot in diameter. Others are tubular, and spotted and flecked with brown; others, in the shade of trees, are white as snow; others, again, wear a delicate blush like that of the rose. The delicate surfaces of some are embossed like antique shields; others resemble a Chinese parasol, a cone, an inverted pyramid in shape; others are grotesque and gibbous; then there are the scented, gingery mushrooms, and the massy puff-ball, which, before it becomes dry, has been known to weigh several pounds. As certain species bear a close likeness to poisonous fungi, mushroom-gathering is a pursuit not to be lightly or carelessly undertaken.

In the late autumn the boy in the country may amuse himself with collecting ferns for the decoration of his sister's rockwork or the shrubbery walks, or for the concealment of an unsightly corner in the garden, or for preserving in his *herbarium*. There are fully five hundred species of British ferns, but not more than twenty are common, and the commonest of all is the brake or bracken, which waves its tall fronds on heath and moorland, in woods and parks, along green hedgerows and in grassy lanes, frequently attaining a considerable size. In some parts of the Northern country it is used as food for swine and horses, as manure, and as a substitute for soap. In days of yore there was a mode of divining by means of the bracken; the stem of which was cut across, and the secrets of the future were inferred from the characters formed by the dark brown or black

lines of the tubes and fibres. It was said that the seeds were visible only on St. John's Eve, and that if they were gathered at the exact moment of the good saint's birth, they rendered their possessor invisible ; as Shakespeare puts it—

“ We have the receipt of fern seed : we walk invisible.”

The bracken, in allusion to the markings on a section of the stem, is occasionally called the eagle fern ; it flourishes all over our island, from the romantic glens of the Grampians to the dells and dingles of sunny Devonshire, forming an admirable covert for the wild buck and the timorous hare or rabbit :—

“ Oh ! eagle fern, when I thee discern,
When thy withered leaf I meet,
In places the careless foot might spurn,
The crowded mart or street,
Thou takest me back to thy birthplace fair,
Where thou wavest in thy pride,
And the form of the hare and the deer's close lair
Still 'mid thy stems abide.”

Less frequently met with, but more beautiful, is the maiden-hair, with its black, elastic, slender stalks, supporting fan-shaped pinnules of a delicate green. Then there is the adder's tongue, with the segments of its leaves all curled and contracted ; and the oak fern, and the hart's tongue, with long and tender bright green leaves ; and the king-fern ; and, excelling in grace, the lady-fern which grows strongest—

“ Where the morning dew lies longest,
Where the copsewood is the greenest,
Where the fountain glistens sheenest.”

In one of Wordsworth's poems occurs a fine allusion to this queen of ferns (*Osmunda regalis*) :—

“ That tall fern,
So stately, of the Queen *Osmunda* named,—
Plant lovelier in its own retired abode
. . . than Naid by the side
Of Grecian brook, or lady of the mere
Sole sitting by the shores of old romance.”

It may be, however, that their families undertake the usual autumnal migration, and that the boys visit the seaside. For

most boys, or at least most English boys, this is the culminating point—the high-water mark, to choose an appropriate imagery—of happiness! They take to the sea like ducks to the water. You will see them, between school hours, with an old clasp-knife shaping a fragment of wood into the likeness of a boat, which, with a triangular piece of cotton for a sail, will be launched upon the cistern, or in the water-butt, or in the nearest pond. Their favourite reading is sea-stories, narratives of battle and shipwreck, lives of famous old seakings, and records of buccaneers, pirates, and circumnavigators. They cover their slates and the fly-leaves of their exercise-books with sketches of men-of-war, frigates, brigs, sloops, and yachts under canvas, or with “bare poles” driving before a heavy gale, or stranded on a rocky coast. At some time or other in the life of almost every boy there comes to him, I believe, a longing to go to sea; and if he passes a young midddy in the streets, you will see him stand rooted to the spot, filled with admiration of his gallant figure! Give him a chance of indulging his aquatic tastes, if only on a canal or the artificial lake in the public park, and mark how eagerly he seizes it! To such a boy the seaside is rife with pleasure than the Garden of Eden itself would be! If there are caves in the cliffs, then he and his mates assume the character of bold smugglers, and what stirring romances they invent and enact! How they clamber up acclivities which would make an adult brain dizzy, and slide down rugged steeps which seem impassable to anything but a chamois! How with trousers tucked up above the knee they paddle about in the briny pools! What collections they make of seaweed and shells, and what risks they run in making them! There is not an old salt upon the beach that does not know them, and with whom they are not on the friendliest possible terms. They soon learn to handle an oar, and, if opportunity favour, to steer and sail a boat, and you may see their tiny craft scudding across the bay or firth in every interval of fair weather. They gather on the pier to watch the arrival or departure of the steamer, and criticise her “build” with a wonderfully knowing air. They can tell a mainsail from a marlinspike, I promise you, and will read you off the names of every rope and every bit of canvas. What a luxury it is to doff the habiliments which a regard for social conventionalities compels them

to wear, and in the freshness of an early summer morning to plunge into the rippling wave and disport themselves like so many mermen! But there is seemingly no end to the gaieties and vivacities of boys at the seaside. Are there not donkey-races, and boat-races, and swimming matches? Are there not crabs to be caught, and do not shrimps dart to and fro in the clear pools which the tide leaves behind it on the ribbèd sand? And if the boys have any knowledge, as they ought to have, of marine zoology, are there not starfishes, and other strange or beautiful creatures, to be caught along the shore? Are there not such things as polypes, and pink holothurians, and echini, and bravely-coloured medusæ or jellyfish? Then the lighthouse on yonder bluff of sea-washed rock, with its burning eye shining so brightly yet so peacefully all through the hours of dark, and its shapely column of stone braving so steadfastly the fury of the north-west gale, is it not a source of inexhaustible interest? Nor must we forget the coastguardsmen, in their little white settlement upon the cliffs, and the wonderful telescopes they carry, and the stories they have to tell of far-off lands and adventures upon the wide, wide seas! Nor the fishermen in their sou'-westers, their rough pea-jackets, and great waterproof boots up to the knees; their strongly built boats, tightly caulked and tarred all over, with great brown sails bearing the numbers by which they are registered in the harbour books; and their huge nets, with innumerable meshes, which by day are suspended on poles along the shore to be mended or to dry. To see them sail away at evening is one of the regular duties of the boys. There they stand upon the beach, watching every operation with vigilant eye—watching the hoisting of the flapping canvas, and the progress of each labouring vessel as she breasts the surging tide, and speeds onward and ever onward into the purple mists so swiftly gathering over the distant horizon. And there they are, next morning, to see the sturdy crew returning into port, and to superintend the landing of their finny cargoes, and to listen to the hum of voices as rapid sales are effected on the spot, or barrels and hampers of fish despatched to catch the London trains.

They do a little fishing on their own account; and you may see their boats slowly drifting across the placid bay, with their "*sea-lines*" out, and rest assured that they will return (for boys

are lucky) with a dish of "fins"—flounders, or pollacks, or saithe, or even mackerel—for the family's dinner. Then there are the lobster-pots to be examined; and that reminds us of the story of the mayor of Plymouth and the lobster-pot, which, as related by that voracious chronicler, Charles Kingsley, I shall venture to repeat for the sake of the warning it conveys to reckless youth. Here it is, and let every boy who goes lobster-catching bear it constantly in mind.

One day the mayor was so weary of sitting on a hard chair, in a grand furred gown with a gold chain round his neck, hearing one policeman after another come in and sing, "What shall we do with the drunken sailor, so early in the morning?" and answering them each exactly alike, "Put him in the roundhouse till he gets sober, so early in the morning!" that, when it was over, he jumped up, and played leapfrog with the town-clerk till he burst his buttons, and then had his luncheon, and burst some more buttons, and then he said: "It is low spring tide; I shall go out this afternoon and cut my capers." By which he meant that he would go and have an afternoon's fun like any schoolboy, and catch lobsters with an iron hook.

So to the Mewstone he went, and for lobsters he looked. And when he came to a certain crack in the rocks, he was so excited that, instead of putting in his hook, he put in his hand; and Mr. Lobster was at home, and caught him by the finger, and held on.

"Yah!" said the mayor, and pulled as hard as he dared; but the more he pulled the more the lobster pinched, till he was forced to be quiet.

Then he tried to get his hook in with his other hand; but the hole was too narrow.

Then he pulled again; but he could not stand the pain.

Then he shouted and bawled for help; but there was no one nearer him than the man-of-war inside the breakwater.

Then he began to turn a little pale; for the tide flowed, and still the lobster held on.

Then he turned quite white; for the tide was up to his knees, and still the lobster held on.

Then he thought of cutting off his finger; but he wanted two things to do it with—courage and a knife, and he had *got neither*.

Then he turned quite yellow ; for the tide was up to his waist, and still the lobster held on.

Then he thought over all the naughty things he had ever done : all the sand which he had put in the sugar, and the sloe-leaves in the tea, and the water in the treacle, and the salt in the tobacco (because his brother was a brewer, and a man must help his own kin).

Then he turned quite blue ; for the tide was up to his breast, and still the lobster held on.

Then, I have no doubt, he repented fully of all the said naughty things which he had done, and promised to mend his life, as too many do when they think they have no life left to mend ; whereby, as they fancy, they make a very cheap bargain. But the old fairy with the birch rod soon undeceives them.

And then he grew all colours at once, and turned up his eyes like a duck in thunder ; for the water was up to his chin, and still the lobster held on.

And then came a man-of-war's boat round the Mewstone, and saw his head sticking up out of the water. One said it was a keg of brandy, and another that it was a cocoa-nut, and another that it was a buoy loose, and another that it was a black diver, and wanted to fire at it, which would not have been pleasant for the mayor ; but just then such a yell came out of a great hole in the middle of it that the midshipman in charge guessed what it was, and bade pull up to it as fast as they could. So somehow or other the jack-tars got the lobster out and set the mayor free, and put him ashore at the Barbican. He never went lobster-catching again ; and we will hope he put no more salt in the tobacco, not even to sell his brother's beer.

Though boys have what the Americans call "a good time" of it "down by the sea," I am by no means sure that it is a period of unmixed happiness to their parents and guardians ; and this not so much because they reduce their clothes to the condition of Joseph's coat when his wicked brothers showed it to tearful Jacob, not so much because they rush in and out of the house with an absolute disregard to all laws of order and decorum, as because they carry their usual recklessness to a dangerous extreme. Is it necessary to remind them that if they can climb and crawl like cats, they have

not, like cats, nine lives? That if, when out boating, they indulge in "larks," and capsize their skiff, they run an imminent risk, especially if they cannot swim, of being drowned? That if they heedlessly clamber up difficult rocks, they may perchance come to grief? That if they bathe and swim at all times and in all places, they will probably bring on a serious illness? I suppose counsel of this kind has been administered by their seniors to generation after generation of English boys, and with small profit; but it is to be hoped that the rising generation is at once more prudent and more dutiful.

Autumn at length passes, as spring passed and summer passed. The swallows make ready for their southward flight, and in yellow showers the leaves fall at every gust from the sorrowing trees. The warm days and nights have gone; after dark there is frequently a white frost on the ground, and the plants shiver through their dry and hollow stalks as the keen wind rustles over them. All nature is preparing for the winter. Hedgehog and badger and lizard creep into their holes in the earth, where they will slumber till spring. Frogs sink into the muddy bottom of pond and ditch, and "go in" for a long hibernation. The moles have finished off their winter nests, and the bats, suspended by their heels in the old barn or cob-web-covered outhouse, wrap themselves in the membranes of their fore-feet and indulge in a dreamless doze. The rat, the mouse, and the squirrel seek their secret stores, which they have garnered up with so much prudence in the days of abundance. The fresh-ploughed fields lie bare and black in the occasional sunshine; and the farmer saunters round his stack-yard to survey with more or less satisfaction the neatly built ricks, or he inspects his cattle-sheds and his poultry-yard, and calculates his probable Christmas gains. It might seem that the boy's occupation, like Othello's, would now be gone. But he has his box of tools, and there are fences to be repaired or rabbit-hutches constructed; he has his spade and hoe, and the garden must be cleared of its autumn refuse; and, above all, for those dark hours when out-of-door-work or play is impracticable, he has his books to read, his lessons to prepare. Soon will come again the scenes of winter, and the merry time of sleighing, skating, sliding, snowballing; but even then the long evenings will invite him to seek the companionship of

the poets, sages, historians, who have enshrined their thoughts and fancies in deathless language.

For boys in the country, we venture to recommend as a pleasant and profitable mode of cheering the winter nights the formation of a little club of readers, a kind of private Literary Society, meeting alternately at the houses of the various members, for the purpose of mental improvement and intellectual recreation. More years ago than the present writer cares to remember, he was a member of such a club, and well does he recollect the entertainment it afforded. We met once a week, some of us making long journeys through miry lanes or drifts of snow to attend the rendezvous. We had our chairman and our secretary, the former to preside at all gatherings, and the latter to keep our "minutes." We paid a small fee, and there were also certain fines; and thus we had funds for a double subscription to the circulating library in the town of K—, some five miles distant. Occasionally we issued gratis tickets to our relatives and intimate friends, which gave them admission to our "entertainments." We recited pieces of poetry; we read some of the plays of Shakespeare; we repeated from memory, or in our own words, narratives of adventure and enterprise; we wrote essays upon given subjects, the best being rewarded with a small prize; and at the close of our session we called to our assistance some accomplished and kindly damsels, and gave an "amateur dramatic performance" in the largest drawing-room at our command. Pleasanter Christmas holidays we never passed; and I believe our parents and guardians thought so too, for the necessary preparation of our essays and recitations occupied our leisure, and left us no time for mischief.

I have said that we wrote "essays." But these were not strings of commonplaces suggested by some copybook maxim, such as, "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" nor were they chapters of dull platitudes upon abstract subjects, such as War, Friendship, Poetry, and the like. We had had sufficient experience of these at school. We were determined to eschew dulness; whatever we were, we would not be bores. So we wrote short lives of great men, or we narrated some incidents in our own eventful careers, or we turned passages from Scott and Byron into the most animated prose we could command; or we made ourselves masters of

the best plays of the best dramatists, and then related their plots and scenes in our own language. This last experiment, if not the most successful, was always the most interesting, as the writer was required to read aloud his production for the benefit of an admiring or a critical audience. The reader may be glad of a specimen of this kind of composition. If not entertaining in itself, it will serve as a model. The play selected is Ben Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour," and the reader will please to imagine that the members of the B—— Literary Club are duly assembled, that the president has seated himself in his arm-chair, that a "select" circle of visitors have gathered round, that the writer has been called upon for the week's "essay," and that "mouthing his a'es and o'es" (as Tennyson puts it), he reads it aloud as follows:—

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR :

A New Version of an Old Play.

Master Knowell was a London citizen of credit and renown in those famous days when Elizabeth the Great sat with firm seat upon the English throne. Not a man more honoured upon 'Change, let me tell you, or whose signature to a bond was more satisfactory to the recipient. He belonged to the genus which we designate "respectable:" his figure, something of the portliest, was respectable; his grave and serious countenance was legibly inscribed with respectability; his sad-coloured doublet, his well-spun hose—all very respectable! I cannot affirm that there was anything of the heroic in his nature, or that his imagination ever soared beyond his desk and ledger; but mind you, it is the steady draught-horse that grows sleek and fat, not the ardent steed,—“the courser of the sun,”—which breaks its heart in constant straining at the collar.

Enough for you and me that Master Knowell was a respectable man,—“warm, very warm, sir,”—whose button we would have proudly and gladly held whenever occasion offered.

Now, Master Knowell had married—as all respectable men *should* do; and had a son—as most respectable men have; and a nephew—another endowment which I have observed to be common among respectable men. The son, Master Edward Knowell, was a scholar “of good account in both the Universities,” and much perplexed his worthy sire

the startling audacities of his genius and the abnormal character of his ideas. A straight-limbed, well-featured, comely youth was Edward Knowell, who could figure handsomely in a galliard, and whisper airy nothings in a pretty ear with any gallant in London. Very different to him both physically and mentally was his cousin Stephen, who was what the Scotch would call "a gowk," and the Elizabethans called "a gull :"—

"A gull is he who feares a velvet gowne,
And when a wench is brave dares not speak to her ;
A gull is he which traverseth the towne,
And is for marriage known a common wooer.
A gull is he which, while he proudly weares
A silver-hilted rapier by his side,
Indures the lies, and knocks about the eares,
While in his sheath his sleeping sword doth bide.
But to define a gull in termes precise,—
A gull is he which *seemes* and *is not wise*." ¹

To complete this rapid sketch of the Knowell household, I have only to name the ready-witted servant Brainworm, a fellow of infinite fancy, with a rare talent for mimicry, and a fertility in artful expedients equal to that of Asmodeus himself.

It happened one morning that Master Stephen, bent upon the loving errand of a visit to his cousin, chanced to fall in with his worthy uncle, who as yet had not quitted his house, and so demeaned himself as truly to justify the not very flattering picture of him we have essayed to draw.

"What is your business, coz?" said Knowell.

"Nothing," replied Stephen, with a simper, "but just to see how you do, good uncle."

"It is kindly done, and you are welcome," replied the respectable citizen.

"Ay, I know that, sir—I would not have come else. But how does my cousin Edward? I would fain borrow of him some treatise upon hawking and hunting."

"Why, I hope you do not mean to go a-hawking?" rejoined his uncle.

"No, but I intend to practise against next year. I have bought hawk, and hood, and bells, and all; I only need a book to keep it by. Now, be not angered, uncle! Why, I

¹ Sir John Davies, Epigram ii. So Shakespeare :—"a most notorious geck and gull."

would not give a rush for a man, however studied in Latin and Greek, if he be not learned in hawking and hunting language. Because I dwell at Hogsden, shall I keep company with none but steady cits or Finsbury archers? A fine jest, i' faith! 'slid, a gentleman must show himself a gentleman."

Knowell was sorely displeased, I can assure you, at this silly speech of Master Stephen's, and gave him sterling advice in good, solid phrases—advice which fared as advice generally does when spent upon the young and thriftless. "Do not spend your coin," said he, "on every bauble you fancy. Let not your sail"—he loved a brave old proverb!—"be bigger than your boat. Stand not so much on your gentility—

'Which is an airy and mere borrowed thing
From dead men's dust and bones; and none of yours,
Except you make and hold it.'"

His lecture was here abruptly terminated by the entrance of a stranger, who proved to be the servant of one Master Wellbred, a young gentleman of good repute, whose sister had recently married Kitley, the wealthy merchant in the Old Jewry. He bore a letter addressed to "Master Knowell," but not distinguishing between the son and father, he unthinkingly placed it in the wrong hands. Despatching Stephen to find his cousin, and sending the letter-bearer under charge of Brainworm to the buttery, the elder Knowell proceeded to acquaint himself with the contents of the missive, comforting his conscience with the equivocation that the address might with as much propriety stand for him as for his son.

There is a common adage that "listeners hear no good of themselves," and they who pry into the secrets of others seldom obtain any special comfort from the knowledge. The letter was written in a lively strain, and simply invited Master Ned to some excellent entertainment at "the Windmill;" but to the respectable precisian it seemed a most pernicious composition. "Is this," he cried, "the man whom my son has declared to possess the happiest wit and choicest brain the times have produced? Surely, for his manners, I judge him to be a profane and dissolute wretch." But he wisely resolved not to interfere too openly with his son's amusements, and so, summoning Brainworm, and bidding him carry the letter to his young master, he went his way in sober sadness.

Meanwhile Master Edward was amusing himself with the antics of his light-witted cousin, whom—when he learned from his friend Wellbred's letter the nature of the entertainment prepared for him—he resolved to take with him as an agreeable and amusing addition to the feast.

"You will accompany me, will you not, coz?" he inquired. "I protest it is not to involve you in any plot against the state."

"Sir, that's all one, an't were," replied the exulting Stephen; "you shall command me twice as far as Moorgate to do you good."

And so, with many fine speeches, the two cousins hastened to join the merry guests assembled at "the Windmill."

II.

In a narrow unwholesome alley,—it disappeared long ago before the march of civic improvement,—one Cob, a tankard-bearer, who obtained a sorry living by selling water to the citizens—for as yet the New River was unknown, and turn-cocks and water-rates were not numbered among the vexations of hapless householders—one Cob kept a small tenement which had belonged to his father and grandfather before him. In this mean house, however, and with this humble water-carrier, dwelt a man of fashionable notoriety, no other than the celebrated Captain Bobadil, whose friends, mind you, were not in the least aware that their swaggering comrade had so poor a lodging.

Master Matthew, however, the foppish son of a decent fish-monger, who craved after the cheap celebrity of "a man about town," had contrived, on the morning of his introduction to our readers, by dint of subtle questions pressed upon stolid cits and weary wanderings through dismal purlieus, to discover the captain's "one-pair-back," where that splendid roysterer was sleeping off the effects of his last night's potations upon a hard bench, with a couple of cushions under his head, and a cloak concealing his lank, ungainly limbs.

"Save you, sir, save you, captain," said Master Matthew as he entered, wondering, the sparsely furnished and diminutive chamber; "you have an exceeding fine lodging here, very neat and private." Observe the tact with which Master Matthew

hit upon the only two recommendations the captain's lodging possessed! Crafty Master Matthew! That one useful and honied sentence served him better than a score of letters of introduction.

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Bobadil, recovering from a temporary feeling of confusion; "but, I pray you, inform no gentleman of our acquaintance of my dwelling-place; not that I need care who knows it, for the cabin truly is very convenient, but I would not be troubled with too much visiting. And, sir, by the heart of valour"—Captain Bobadil, be it said, cultivated an original mode of dainty swearing—"except it be to some peculiarly choice spirits, such as yourself, I could not extend thus far. I love a cleanly and quiet privacy above all the tumult and war of fortune. But what new book have you there? Let me taste its quality while I make some slight changes in my apparel."

Nothing loth, Master Matthew, with an air of exquisite sentimentality, began to declaim some amatory poems of his own composition, whereof the chronicler of this moving tale has been able to make recovery only of a single quatrain. From this the reader may judge whether posterity has cause to regret the loss of Master Matthew's verses:—

"To thee, the purest object to my sense,
The most refined essence heaven covers,
Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
The happy state of turtle-billing lovers!"

Bobadil having completed his toilet, and Matthew his recitation, the latter proceeded to explain the cause of a serious difference which had arisen between himself and Master Well-bred's half-brother, Squire George Downright; receiving the opinion and counsel of the captain with the graceful humility that becomes an inferior mind when listening to the utterances of genius.

"The other day," said Matthew, "I happened to enter into some discourse respecting a sword which, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory beautiful and gentleman-like; yet he condemned it, and cried it down for the most pidd and ridiculous that ever he saw."

"Hang him, the rook!" exclaimed Bobadil, "he has no more judgment than a malt-horse [i.e., a brewer's hack]; by

St. George, I wonder you'd lose a thought upon such an animal."

"But he brags he will cudgel me."

"When," says Bobadil, with a most truculent air, "when said he so?"

"Yesterday, they say; a young gallant, a friend of mine, told me so."

"By the foot of Pharaoh, you should send him an instant challenge! I'll show you a trick or two you shall kill him with at pleasure. Look you, draw your sword, and I will give you a lesson. So, hollow your body more; now, stand fast on your left leg, keep your due proportion of time. Oh, you disorder your point most irregularly. . . . Well, put on your cloak, and we will off to some tavern or other. What money have you about you?"

"I have not above two shillings," replied Matthew, somewhat exhausted by his unlooked-for sword exercise.

"Well, 'tis little enough," cries Bobadil, "but we can get a radish or two, a pipe of tobacco, and a stoup of wine. Then will we call on young Wellbred, where, mayhap, we shall meet Squire Downright, and put him to the question. Come, good Master Matthew."

III.

Master Kitely was blessed with a large fortune and a fair wife, but cursed with an unreasonable and a jealous temper. He strove, indeed, to hide his jealousy from himself and from the world, but not the less did the subtle poison work like madness on his brain. And of whom was he suspicious? Of none other than his brother-in-law—such are the fantastic tricks which jealousy plays with a good man's brain!—of his own brother-in-law, Master Wellbred, whom he had unwisely made the inmate of his house, and who, being of a somewhat merry disposition, loved to draw around him the gay spirits of the town—not altogether the fittest company for a decorous London trader. Ah! what lively revels they held, what toasts they drank, what boisterous songs they sung! Of such irregular courses and giddy humours it was natural, perhaps, that Kitely should complain to Squire Downright, noisy Wellbred's elder brother; but it was assuredly a notable instance of self-degra-

dation that he should confide to him the secret of his unwarrantable suspicions.

He was to sink yet lower. It happened that on one occasion business required him to go from home for two short hours, and, lo ! his weak and wayward nature was sore perplexed. Could he leave beauty unguarded by a dragon ? "Business," he cried, "go by for once. No, beauty, no ; you are too precious to be left without a ward. You must be watched, for if opportunity be given you, no quicksand is more treacherous !" Alas ! poor and false is the love that yields to doubt and suspicion !

So he called to him his trusty clerk. "Carry in my cloak again ; I will not go."

"But, sir," replied punctilious Thomas Cash, "your scrivener will be there with the bonds."

"That is true, fool that I am ! I had clean forgot it ; I must go." And the weak man was in an agony of jealous apprehension. "And yet Wellbred will be here presently with one or other of his loose companions. I know not what to say or do. My brain is like an hour-glass, wherein my imaginations run like sands, filling up time. Thomas !" And he whispered to himself, "Ay, I can trust him. He knows not how to deceive me." A moment's hesitation. "And yet I will not. Is Cob within ?" Again a pause of doubt. "But he has a glib tongue, and will prate all over the town." So he returned to his original resolution, and began to address Thomas in a solemn tone and with uplifted finger, much to the said Thomas's bewilderment.

"Thomas, you may deceive me, yet I hope you love"—

"Sir," said honest Cash, somewhat wonderingly, "if a servant's faithful duty may be called love, be sure I yield it to you."

"I thank you heartily, Thomas," rejoined his master, grasping him by the hand ; "with all my heart I thank you. I have a secret to impart to you, but when once you have it, I must seal your lips up. It is a thing so near my honour that if thou *shouldst* reveal it—ay, it were a great weakness."

"Give it no other name than treachery," Cash exclaimed. "By my soul's safety, I protest my tongue shall never reveal a word intrusted me."

But the unhappy man could not rely upon oaths or protes-

tations. He longed to set a spy upon his wife, and yet he durst not. The colour on his brow went and came, his eyes trembled with hot tears, his lips quivered with the burden of his jealous agony, while he felt that he could not reveal himself in all his meanness to his servant. He suddenly broke into a number of incoherent directions, interspersed with mysterious allusions, which startled Cash into a fever of curiosity; and having strictly charged him to send a messenger should Master Wellbred bring home any of his merry comrades, with aching heart and reluctant step he quitted the house which his weakness filled with so much disquiet.

He had scarcely crossed the threshold before a goodly company arrived, with such peals of hearty laughter as betokened their high animal spirits,—Master Wellbred, young Edward Knowell, Brainworm, Captain Bobadil, and Master Stephen. Do you wonder that honest Cash went in quick search of Gaspar, or Martin, or Francis, or Cob, and discovering at length the last-named varlet, despatched him to his master? Oh, the rage, the anguish which filled Master Kitley's heart when the tidings were forced upon his unwilling ears! Had he been informed of the ruin of his premises, he could not have displayed a greater passion. He cried, in frenzied tones :—"Bane to my fortunes! what meant I by marrying? I, that before was master of my own free thoughts, am now a very slave! But, Cob, what entertainment had they? I am sure my sister and— and my wife would bid them welcome? Ha?"

"Like enough," answered Cob, his sluggish mind not appreciating the drift of his master's question; "yet I heard not a word of it—not a word of it."

"Which of them—ha!—which, which of them—kissed my wife—no, no, my sister—ha! who was it? say!"

"Well, if thou wilt have the truth of it," began honest Cob, while his master was torn with fierce emotions, "I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bridewell than your worship's company, if I saw anybody to be kissed, unless they could have kissed the post in the middle of the warehouse; for there I left them all at their tobacco, with a plague."

Exit Master Kitley hurriedly, followed in silent astonishment by louting Cob.

IV.

What on earth brought Master Wellbred, Master Knowell, and their companions—Brainworm, the captain, and the two “gulls,” so unworthily named after two admirable saints—to Master Kitley’s house at so inauspicious a juncture? Was it Destiny, that wayward and mysterious Circumstance, on which fools are so ready to throw the blame of their own folly? Nay, the cause was simple enough; and we need call upon no *deus ex machinâ* to cut the Gordian knot of so trivial a dilemma.

Master Knowell *père* was, as we have shown, almost as profoundly and unreasonably suspicious of Master Knowell *fils* as was Master Kitley of his charming and comely wife. He, too, wanted a trusty spy; but, wickeder or more resolute than his brother citizen, he found, or thought he had found one, in the ingenious and ready-witted Brainworm. Truth to tell, however, the latter worshipped the rising sun, and, while affecting to carry out his master’s wishes and to dog young Knowell’s footsteps, he contrived—in the disguise of a soldier, which he wore so admirably as to deceive even those who knew him best—to learn more of the paternal projects than Knowell had wished him to learn. He straightway took his wares to market, and informed young Knowell of the plot laid against his peace. It was thus that he became acquainted with that young gentleman’s choice companions, whom he attended on their jovial expedition to Master Kitley’s house.

But the impatient reader—I am sure of it—is already skipping a line here and a sentence there, with the natural desire of ascertaining what foundation, if any, there was for Master Kitley’s doubt of his wife’s affection. Let him return with us to the good company assembled under the jealous merchant’s roof, and in due time he shall learn what it will greatly advantage him to know.

In upon the revellers at Master Kitley’s broke an unwelcome apparition; not, indeed, the master of the house himself, but his sturdy kinsman Downright, who, infected by the trader’s wild suspicions, proceeded most roundly to rate young Wellbred, to ridicule Master Matthew, and soon contrived to embroil himself with that most valorous soldier, Captain Bobadil. From hot words they came to drawn swords; and as Bobadil

threatened to prick Master Downright's flesh "full of holes" with his rapier, we may suppose that there would have been sanguinary work had not Kitely opportunely returned in time to separate the angry opponents. When the party had retired, Dame Kitely and Mrs. Bridget endeavoured to make some excuses for the fray, but they succeeded only in confirming Kitely's suspicions; for while *they* were speaking of young Knowell as "a civil gentleman of very excellent good parts," because he was attached to Mistress Bridget, *he* construed their commendations as applying, with open effrontery, to his *bête noire*, Master Wellbred.

V.

As I have hinted, a strong affection existed between Miss Bridget Kitely and Master Edward Knowell.

Now, the latter was very desirous that his suit to his fair lady-love should come to a speedy and prosperous conclusion, and to this end he conferred seriously with his friend Wellbred and his follower Brainworm. A certain line of conduct which, it was thought, would not fail to prove effectual with her brother Kitely, was discussed and sanctioned at a council of war holden by the three confederates shortly after the occurrences already described; and Brainworm, having contrived to get from a lawyer's clerk, named Formal, a loan of his professional costume—for in those days men wore appropriate and distinctive attire, according to their vocation, trade, and social position—metamorphosed himself from a swaggering soldier into a precise and sober lawyer, in order to conduct their plans to a successful issue.

But before we follow him on his way, or trace the further fortunes of Master Kitely, let us return to a gentleman I have unhandsomely neglected, though his remarkable and excellent qualities demand, on my part and the reader's, the most respectful notice.

Bright was the afternoon of merry May and pleasant the green sward of Moorfields, when Captain Bobadil, his satellites Matthew and Stephen, and young Edward Knowell, were exhibiting their bravery of dress and airiness of manners before the dazzled eyes of curious 'prentices and wondering nursemaids. *And their discourse ran as follows:—*

"MATTHEW.—Sir, did your eyes ever taste the like clown of him where we were to-day, Master Wellbred's half-brother? I think the whole earth cannot show his parallel, by this daylight.

"KNOWELL.—We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me he has fallen foul o' you, too.

"MATTHEW.—Oh, aye, sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

"BOBADIL.—Aye, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that. You shall kill him beyond question, if you be so generously-minded.

"MATTHEW (*making sundry feints and passes*).—Indeed, it is a most excellent trick.

"BOBADIL.—Oh, you do not give spirit enough to your motion; you are too tardy, too heavy! Oh, it must be done like lightning—hey! (*and he practises at a post with amazing assurance and exaggeration*).

"MATTHEW (*with intense admiration*).—Rare captain!

"BOBADIL (*with affected modesty*).—Tut, 'tis nothing, unless it be done in a—punto.

"KNOWELL.—Captain, did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

"MATTHEW.—Oh, good sir! yes, I hope he has.

"BOBADIL (*drawing himself up, and preparing to deliver the speech that has made him famous in history*).—I will tell you, sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together as I have walked along in divers skirts of the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing as the pismire, raising a hill which a man may spread abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself I could have slain them all, but I delight not in murder. I am loth to bear any other than this bastinado for them; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed, for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

"KNOWELL.—Aye, believe me, may you, sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

"BOBADIL.—Alas, no! what's a peculiar [*i.e., a single*] man to a nation? Not seen.

"KNOWELL (*skilfully humouring the braggadocio to the top of his bent*).—Oh, but your skill, sir!

"BOBADIL.—Indeed, that might be some loss; but who respects it? I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal. I am a gentleman, and live here obscure and to myself; but, were I known to his Majesty and the Lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one-half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

"KNOWELL.—Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

"BOBADIL.—Why thus, sir. I would select nineteen men to myself throughout the land; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit and able constitution. I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your imbroccata, your passoda, your montonto! till they could all play very near, or altogether, as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong. We twenty would come into the field the tenth of March or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not, in their honour, refuse us. Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a day; that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand, forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days, kill them all up by computation. And this I will venture my poor gentleman-like carcase to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood, that is, civilly by the sword.¹

"KNOWELL.—Why, are you so sure of your hand, captain, at all times?

"BOBADIL (*loftily*).—Tut, never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

¹ This speech has been already quoted in reference to braggarts and bragging; but it seemed desirable to repeat it here, in order not to impair the connection of the dialogue.

"KNOWELL.—I would not stand in Downright's state then, an' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London !

"BOBADIL.—Why, sir, you mistake ! If he were here now, by this welkin I would not draw my weapon on him. Let this gentleman (*pointing with airy condescension to Master Matthew*) do his mind ; but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, whenever I meet him."

Just as this brave speech was truculently delivered by the courageous captain, Squire Downright appeared upon the scene. And Squire Downright had not forgotten his quarrel at Master Kitley's.

"O Pharaoh's foot," he cried, alluding to one of Bobadil's favourite oaths, "have I found you ? Come, draw your tool—draw, or I will thrash you !"

Bobadil's heart sank within him, and his face grew pale with mortal terror. "Gentleman of valour," and he whined, much to the edification of Master Knowell, "I do believe in you—hear me—I never thought of it until now, but, body of me, I had a warrant of the peace served upon me even now as I came along."

The pretence that he was bound over to keep the peace availed him nothing. Downright snatched his cudgel from him, and, I promise you, belaboured him soundly, until he actually shed tears with pain and fright, while Master Knowell, looking on in huge amusement, also wept, but with an agony of laughter. When Downright's arm grew weary, he spurned the cowardly braggart from him, and, with a courteous bow to the amused spectators, went on his way. Then Bobadil made an effort to pluck up heart of grace, and once more to impose his swaggering air upon his companions.

"I never before sustained such a disgrace, by heaven ! Sure I was struck by a planet !"

"No, captain," said Stephen, simply, "you were struck with a stick."

So it is that when an ass takes unto himself a lion's skin and a lion's roar, he is sure to be stripped of his stolen honours by the noble animal he presumes to imitate, and, in his degradation, to furnish sport for asses like unto himself !

VI.

The scene now changes, swiftly as the alternations of a phantasmagoria, to the street wherein dwelt honest Cob; a locality of unsavoury character, to which the reader has been already introduced. Were the honest water-carrier's neighbours as inquisitive as you or I, kind reader, they might well marvel at the commotion prevailing within and without that modest tenement—a commotion resulting from the vigorous project devised by Wellbred and executed by Brainworm. First enters the elder Knowell in search of his son, whom he believes to have wandered thither, but upon no honourable doings; and when Tib, Cob's shrewish help-mate, protests that she knows him not and has never seen him, he angrily threatens to fetch the constable. Next arrives Dame Kitely, of whom Knowell has heard as his son's supposed lady-love, in anxious quest of her "kind and faithful husband." For it had occurred to Master Wellbred to possess the good dame, like her husband, with jealous fancies, in the expectation that some event might thereby be brought about which would cure—on the principle of *similia curantur similibus*—the miserable citizen of his much-to-be-lamented infatuation. While she is parleying with the astounded Tib, her husband, who has likewise been a victim of Wellbred's ingenious practices, enters in a disguise which screens him from recognition by the elder Knowell, but does not prevent his detection by his wife. So, when Knowell seizes him on the one side in the belief that it is his son whom he has surprised, Dame Kitely grasps him on the other, because he is her husband.

"Hide, hide your face for shame," she cries; "i'faith, I am glad I have found you at last!"

"What mean you, woman?" exclaims the elder Knowell; "let go your hold. I am his father, and claim him as my son."

Then Kitely in his turn denounces his wife for want of true affection, affirming that she has traitorously given her heart to Master Knowell. "And for you, sir," he exclaims, "thus do I demand my honour's due," and straightway his sword flashes in the air.

"What lunacy is it," says the elder Knowell, "that haunts *this man*? Put up your sword and undeceive yourself."

"KITELY.—I will have proofs—I will. I'll have you every one before the justice. Nay, you *shall* answer it; I charge you, go!

"KNOWELL.—Marry, I go with all my heart. Though I take this to be a trick justly put upon me to punish my impertinent search, and half forgive my son for the device.

"KITELY (*to his wife, partly in sorrow, partly in anger*).—Come, will you go?

"DAME KITELY.—Go? to thy shame, believe me.

"KITELY.—Though both shame and sorrow be the issue, I must, I will be satisfied."

And so they depart, to play out their game of cross purposes before the justice, into whose worshipful presence the reader is requested to follow them.

VII.

Motley was the company assembled in the hall of Justice Clement. Conspicuous above all was the figure of the portly, bland-eyed judge himself; then there were the simple Matthew, who desired to proffer a complaint against the squire of the cudgel, honest Downright; Downright, who had come with a charge against Master Stephen of having stolen his cloak on the occasion of the memorable encounter between him and the boastful Bobadil; and Brainworm, still wearing his lawyer's clerk's disguise, and still the very spirit of intrigue, deceiving not only his master, but Downright, and, indeed, everybody with whom he came in contact.

We have not to wait long for the dénouement. In this last scene the dramatist gathers up all the threads of his story, and weaves them together with firm and skilful hand.

The shrewd magistrate quickly saw through the ingenious and well-meant contrivances of Master Wellbred, who had played the wife's jealousy against the husband's, with the view of curing the latter of his folly. It became evident that the elder Knowell had been cunningly got out of the way by the artifice of Brainworm, to prevent him from interfering with the marriage of his son and Mistress Bridget; no poor and portionless bride, but a pretty woman with a tender loving heart, and a fortune of fully three thousand pounds. Here it may be stated that the elder Knowell was afterwards, and very quickly,

reconciled to his charming daughter-in-law, and brought to acknowledge that his son had made an admirable choice. Tib, therefore, was honourably acquitted of any evil designs against the peace or character of anybody. The justice did not find it difficult to reconcile Matthew to Downright, and the latter withdrew his charge against Stephen. What was to be done with Brainworm? He had plotted against almost everybody, and thrown dust freely in everybody's eyes; but then he was the chief means of bringing things to a happy termination, and of reconciling husband and wife, father and son. Clearly he must be forgiven! As to Kately and his wife, they agreed to cast aside in the future all unworthy suspicions of each other, and to live together in that simple faith and loving loyalty which make the sunshine of wedded life.

Every difficulty disposed of, the jolly justice drank his sack and cracked his jokes, and boasted not a little of the clearness of his perception and the depth of his sagacity.

"Did I not tell you there was a plot against you? Did I not smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought? Have not *you* traced it also, Master Kately?"

To which that much-suffering citizen replied:—

"I have. I confess my folly, and own I have deserved what I suffered for it: the trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now is, that as my folly is cured and my persecutors are forgiven, my shame may be forgotten."

So ring the merry marriage-bells, and set the red wine a-flowing in honour of Mistress Bridget, who to-day becomes the happy wife of young Edward Knowell.

And now, if the reader desire an old-fashioned moral, let him take it in the valedictory words of Justice Clement:—"Do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you."¹

¹ Readers who may attempt this intellectual pastime to speed away a winter evening, will find the following to be excellent subjects:—Shakespeare's "Richard III.," "Hamlet," "King Lear;" Massinger's "New Way to Pay Old Debts;" Southern's "Oroonoko;" Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer;" Miss Mitford's "Rienzi;" Westland Marston's "Patrician's Daughter;" Griffin's "Gisippus;" James White's "King of the Commons;" Sir Henry Taylor's "Edwin the Fair;" Sheridan Knowles' "The Hunchback," "The Wife," "John of Procida;" Robert Browning's "Strafford;" Byron's "Werner;" Scott's "Marmion," "Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Rokeby;" Southey's "Curse of Kehama," &c.

We have already referred to the outdoor amusements of boys in the country, to sleighing, skating, and sliding. We pass on to the merry Christmas-time, when their services are in requisition for cutting evergreens and decorating the chambers with them. Wreaths round the mirrors—wreaths gracefully twining up the gasaliers—festoons across the doorways—bunches of red-berried holly in the windows—mistletoe, with its sprays of pearl, suspended in convenient corners—trophies in the hall ;—in the construction and fixing of these the boys are recognised as useful, and they help the work, it must be admitted, by their cheery talk and lively laughter. Their jokes, perhaps, are not very profound, their sly allusions are undoubtedly very obvious ; but there is such a superabundance of good-humour about all they say and do that it is impossible not to be amused. Most boys, be it observed, have a quick sense of the ridiculous. Words and things are “funny” to them out of which their seniors cannot extract even a smile. And this is specially the case at Christmas-time. You may then serve up the oldest of old jokes, and be sure of your reward in a fit of boyish laughter. Tell them that they will want to unbutton their waistcoats after dinner, and oh, how they will roar ! Advise little Tom to keep a corner for his plum-pudding, and what shrieks of laughter will be forthcoming ! You may even ask them, “When is a door not a door ?” without giving offence. They so overflow with exuberance of high spirits that they will cachinnate at the slightest provocation. They will tell Emily not to flutter so near the mistletoe if she does not want a kiss, and then explode in a tremendous volley. “Why, it is Christmas-time,” they seem to say, “and who would not laugh ?” Tell them that you see nothing to laugh about, and they will crush you with the ancient quip that anybody can laugh when there is anything to laugh about, but that the thing is to laugh at nothing ! For that matter, there is Christmas to laugh at and in and about ! Christmas, with its savoury sirloins, and huge plum-puddings, and delectable mince-pies, and flaming snapdragon, and creamy lamb’s-wool. Christmas, with its steaming geese, and plump capons, and fragrant negus, and stores of apples and pears, oranges and grapes, nuts and raisins ! Christmas, with its foaming ale for the elders, and its pungent ginger-wine for the little ones ! Christmas, with its *glees and carols* and anthems, its music of sweet voices

and chiming bells ! Christmas, with its brief pause of repose and mirth in the stress and strain of the battle of life ! Christmas, with all its dear memories, fond associations, hallowed traditions ! Christmas, with all its love, hope, faith, tenderness, mutual confidence, domestic affection, friendly cordiality, neighbourly goodwill ! Not laugh ? Happy the man who at Christmas recovers something of the old boyish spirit, and laughs as merrily and as frequently as his boys.

"It is the Christmas-holidays—Christmas-day itself—Christmas-night—and joy in every bosom intensifies love. Never before were we brothers and sisters so dear to one another—never before had our hearts so yearned towards the authors of our being—our blissful being ! There they sit, silent in all that outcry—composed in all that disarray—still in all that tumult ; yet, as one or other flying imp sweeps round the chair, a father's hand will playfully strive to catch a prisoner—a mother's gentler touch on some sylph's disordered symar be felt almost as a reproof, and for a moment slacken the fairy flight. One old game treads on the heels of another—twenty within the hour—and many a new game never heard of before nor since, struck out by the collision of kindred spirits in their glee, the transitory fancies of genius inventive through very delight. Then all at once there is a hush, profound as ever falls on some little plot within a forest when the moon drops behind the mountain, and the small green-robed People of Peace at once cease their pastime and vanish. For she—the silver-tongued—is about to sing an old ballad, words and air alike hundreds of years old ; and sing she doth, while tears begin to fall, with a voice too mournfully beautiful long to breathe below, and ere another Christmas shall have come with the falling snows, doomed to be mute on earth, but to be hymning in heaven."

That is our Christmas scene, and a scene familiar to most of my readers. What merry evenings those holiday evenings are, when we gather at our friends' houses or our friends gather at ours, and we set the hours spinning fast down the groove of change with song and dance and pastime. Oh, those old, old games—old and yet ever fresh and delightful ! The romping *Blindman's Buff* and *Hunt the Slipper*, the more intellectual *Proverbs* and *What's my Thought like ?* and *How, When, and Where ?* the grotesque *Magic Music*, the ancient *Hide and Seek*,—how many generations have joined in them with active

hilarity, and how many more will do so? To these succeed the "mazy dance"—the decorous quadrille, the fascinating waltz, the vivacious polka! Then comes a pause for refreshment; and who does not know the luxury, under such circumstances, of a strawberry or lemon ice, or a glass of negus, or even a modest orange? And what an opportunity is thus afforded for the display of refined courtesy on the part of our boys? Some, it is true, will hang about the door like louts, or creep into corners bashfully silent; but the true boy, the boy-knight, the boy-gentleman (if we may use such an awkward compound), is on the alert to supply the wants of the "other sex" with ready deference. He is always at hand when required, yet never in the way. He hits the happy mean between the forwardness that offends and the timidity that annoys. It may be that he hovers more particularly about the one fascinating young lady (aged thirteen) who is (for the time) the bright particular star of his admiration; but he does not forget what society has a right to expect of every gentleman. I like to see such boys—bright, lively, self-possessed, chivalrously polite, yet never intrusive or presumptuous; they are welcome always and everywhere, yet never more so than at Christmas-parties.

Whether, as some critics affirm, the drama is on its last legs—which must be tolerably strong supports, as it has rested upon them, to my certain knowledge, for the last thirty years or more—I will not here or now discuss; but assuredly amongst our boys a love of dramatic representations is on the increase. Amateur theatricals—"drawing-room performances"—are as common now as a game at forfeits was *sub consule Planco*; and there are few boys of intelligence and culture who do not occasionally assume the buskin or the sock. Almost every family has its *jeune premier* and its leading "young lady," its Claude Melnotte and its Pauline; or, if its younger members affect neither melodrama nor tragedy, it is sure to boast of a juvenile Toole and a Charles Matthews *in futuro*. Hence it comes to pass that before Christmas the note of preparation is sounded, and the *corps dramatique* begin their labours. There are the plays to be chosen and the characters to be distributed. Then the dresses have to be decided upon and made—made at home, if possible, or else the fun is greatly lessened. Rehearsals have to be held, at which the more experienced endeavour to drill their fellow-performers into some knowledge of stage-

business ; teach them to mind their cues, when to cross the stage, what to do with their hands, and how to accomplish a decent exit. As time rolls on, increased energy becomes apparent on every side. Amateur artists volunteer to paint the scenery, and amateur carpenters to construct the stage. Wigs have to be made or hired, and beards, moustaches, and whiskers manufactured. Playbills are written out and printed ; notes of invitation despatched. The great little tragedian, Master Kean Kemble, quarrels with the leading lady, Miss Helen Faucit Siddons, and each declares his or her determination not to act if the other does. Horror ! the breach must be closed up ; and the accomplished stage-manager exercises all his diplomacy to effect a reconciliation. Happily at the last moment he is successful. There are songs to be sung, and these must be practised ; and a final chorus, in which one of the basses persists in singing a third too low, has to be mastered. In spite of lets and hindrances, good progress is made, and the gaiety is immense. A dress rehearsal is called. By Saint George, 'tis a gorgeous spectacle ! There struts Harry in large yellow boots up to his knees, slashed doublet, and a cloak of (cotton) velvet, with long ringlets depending from beneath his plumed hat. Jack is grand indeed in a musketeer's uniform, made of coloured calico trimmed with tissue and spangles, with a huge sword slung from the belt that encircles his sturdy waist. Everard is got up as a page ; his short trunks terminate at the knee in frills of lace (real lace lent by Aunt Fanny) ; and his white silk hose and velvet shoes, with bright rosettes of satin ribbon, are simply beautiful. As for the ladies, what pen shall do them justice ? Miss Isabel is attired in satin ; a long white veil o'er her fair curls falls free ; her train upborne by maids of honour three, each dressed in white. Kate wears a dress of ruby velvet, so made as to display a pearl-embroidered stomacher, and a camellia shines, star-like, in her "raven tresses." Saucy Louisa acts the soubrette, and has assumed for the nonce a chambermaid's dress. The other characters are not less extensive in their get-up, but I cannot stop to describe them. Suffice to say that each is neat, in his or her costume complete, and moves about with gallant mien.—Sure finer birds were never seen !

At length, the long-looked-for evening comes, and the boys

(as well as the girls) are on the tiptoe of expectation. The performance (for this night only) at the Royal Thespian Theatre, Little Pedlington, is to begin at eight o'clock precisely, and the audience have been requested to assemble at half-past seven; but the boys begin to dress at six. Then they darken each other's moustache, apply a touch of rouge to each other's cheeks, unwontedly pale with excitement and a little nervousness, tie up each other's "strings," and hear each other's part. The young ladies appear about a quarter to eight, and directly afterwards the scenes are set, the footlights (paraffin lamps) are lighted, the prompter takes up his post in a snug corner, and the manager *pro tem.* gives peremptory orders that the stage shall be cleared. By this time the "stalls" are full—*i.e.*, the drawing-room is crammed with smiling faces—and sister Alice begins the overture to "L'Italiani in Algieri." Not a note is heard "behind the scenes," for everybody is repeating cues and giving or receiving final instructions; and I fear that in front of the curtain the din of conversation drowns the music. Sister Alice plays bravely on, and duly arrives at the last chords, which she strikes with peculiar emphasis as a hint to the performers. The bell rings, and the curtain (made by sewing together three green window-curtains) rises amidst loud applause. Nelly and Alfred have painted a very effective scene, which really deserves the praise it meets with. The piece to be played is an extravaganza on the subject of the "Sleeping Beauty," and the glowing canvas represents a hall in the Sleeping Beauty's palace. There the evil fairy Maligna is seen seated at a spinning-wheel, and, as soon as silence is restored, she explains to the audience the position of affairs. She has a grudge against the Princess Bonnibel, in whose service she is at present engaged, disguised as a housekeeper, and her wicked spirit will not rest until she has satisfied it. Fate has ordained that if the princess shed a drop of blood on her birthday, she falls under the power of the said evil fairy so far that the latter can doom her to a hundred years' sleep; and the fairy rejoices to think that by the time she awakes she will have lost all her good looks, and grown as ugly as herself. Well, it is the princess's birthday, and she has prepared for her a spinning-wheel as a birthday present. Enter the princess (Miss Isabel), attended by her chamberlain, Count Pompomoso, a portly personage, and Baron Scanto-

witzel, his shadow, with a retinue of ladies and pages. The princess's curiosity is stimulated by the spinning-wheel, and, in spite of her chamberlain's warning, she essays to work it, pricks her finger, so that it bleeds, and is carried to her couch swooning. The housekeeper, throwing off her disguise, stands revealed as the evil fairy; waves her hand, and sentences everybody to sleep for a hundred years. Very striking is the tableau as princess, count, baron, ladies, and pages, all fall asleep in quaint or picturesque attitudes, which, it is needless to say, have been carefully studied. But lo! the good fairy Benigna suddenly appears. She cannot reverse her wicked sister's spell, but at least she can neutralise it; and accordingly, waving her wand, she ordains that, at the expiration of the hundred years, the sleepers shall wake up exactly as they then are—not a day older, not a wrinkle uglier! And down falls the curtain amid signs of hearty approbation.

In a few minutes it rises again. The scene represents the exterior of the palace, and Prince Florimel enters, with his companion the Lord Beaudesert, to make known the interesting fact that, though he has never seen the Sleeping Princess except in a portrait, he is desperately, madly in love with her; and having heard that she will be bound to give her hand to any suitor who presents himself at the last moment of the hundred years, is bent upon gaining admission to the palace, for the magical century is nearly over. The evil fairy, still cherishing her spite against the innocent princess, endeavours to throw obstacles in his way, but these are successively removed through the intervention of the good fairy, and at last the prince is free to accomplish his enterprise. The curtain rises on the third tableau to a general outburst of applause. It shows the hall in the princess's palace as before, and the Sleeping Beauty and her courtiers, her maids, and her pages, in their respective positions. Blue and red lights are skilfully thrown upon the scene, which realises as far as possible the description in Tennyson's poem:—

"She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
In palace chambers far apart,
The fragrant tresses are not stirred
That lie upon her charmed heart.

She sleeps : on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest :
She sleeps ; nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest."

Due time having been given to the audience to admire the grouping, dresses, and attitudes of the actors, enter Prince Florimel, followed by his faithful Beaudesert. Of course the prince goes into raptures at the princess's loveliness ! But the clock strikes twelve ; he throws himself on his knees and kisses the princess's hand : she awakes. The charm is at an end, and all living creatures in the Enchanted Palace recover sense and motion. The chamberlain and Scantowitzel are assisted in rousing themselves from their slumbers by Beaudesert, who tweaks each rubicund nose ; and much laughter is caused by the comical gestures of the different characters as they throw off the "exposition of sleep" that has been upon them. The prince then hastens to explain his presence, and has the satisfaction of finding that it is very welcome to the fair Bonnibel. Need we say more ? All ends happily, and the curtain descends to the sound of music, with a general demand for the reappearance of the actors.

After a brief interval a farce follows, in which our boys are quite at home. It is the evergreen "Box and Cox ;" and the audience know not whether to bestow their heartiest plaudits on Box or Cox, while they feel that Mrs. Bouncer, who is capitally made up, merits a considerable share. If Box is funny, Cox is comical, and Mrs. Bouncer is humorously absurd. Altogether, the guests acknowledge that they owe to the boys—not forgetting their sisters and cousins—a pleasant evening, and are very eager that the performance should be repeated.

Amateur theatricals are, of course, as popular among town-boys as among country-boys, but I think that more enjoyment is extracted from them in the country than in the town. In town, it is easy to procure everything that is wanted ; in the country, the boys have to resort to all kinds of expedients, which are usually provocative of genuine fun. I am aware that some "unco guid" people, both in town and country, look very grimly at "private theatricals ;" but I can see no harm in them, while I do see much profit. They bring out a boy's better qualities ; not only his ingenuity and his talent

but his patience, his unselfishness, his perseverance. They improve the manners, *nec sinunt esse feros*. They give boys a certain amount of self-confidence and self-command, besides improving their taste and cultivating their memory. Many an hour is agreeably and not unprofitably occupied in getting them up which might otherwise be spent in idleness, and idleness, as we all know, is the fruitful source of trials and troubles. Go on, boys, by all means, with your ingenious dramatic efforts, and be careful to do your best. Be careful also to yield to one another's wishes, and do not each strive for the first place. Everybody can't be Hamlet; there must be a Ghost and a Gravedigger, Laertes and Horatio; and it is better to be a good Gravedigger than a bad "Hamlet the Dane."

A picture of Christmas as it was has been drawn by Scott in glowing colours:—

"The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell
How, when, and where the monster fell
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassail round in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trolls.
There the huge sirloin reeked: hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas-pie.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery:
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, oh! what masquers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light?
England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.

'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale ;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year."

Much of the old Christmas fervour has vanished, and many of the old Christmas customs are past restoration; but the great festival is still celebrated with very general rejoicing. To the boys it is as dear as ever it was; in their eyes it has lost none of its interest or importance. Beginning at midsummer, they count every day until it dawns upon them. They are the vigorous defenders of its observances, the loyal upholders of its traditions. It is for them that the Christmas-pudding is made; for them that the savoury but deleterious mince-pies are baked; for them the mistletoe hangs over the drawing-room door; for them the theatres renew their displays of burlesque and pantomime; for them the waits make night melancholy with doleful airs; for them the mummers or guisers go from door to door with their old-world interlude; for them the bells ring lustily from the grey old church-tower; and for them and their sisters the Christmas-tree glisters with precious spoil. It is at Christmas that the climax of boyhood's happiness is reached. It may very well be, as cynics tell us, that most of our Christmas festivity is, so far as men and women weary with the trials of life are concerned, factitious and artificial; but to the boys, Christmas is Christmas still. Not more warmly did their forefathers welcome the old grey-beard with his crown of holly than they do. In great, smoky, engine-driving towns; in quiet villages which nestle in leafy hollows, or painfully toil up steep, heart-breaking hills; in old manorial halls, where Queen Bess's health was drunk in the wassail-bowl three centuries ago; in many-gabled farmhouses and trim parsonages; in newly stuccoed villas, grouped together in crescents and terraces on the outskirts of populous cities;—everywhere the boys keep Christmas. Now is the time when railway-guards are maddened by the accumulation of hampers, from all of which protrude the heads or legs of geese, and turkeys, and capons, as if all England had been making a battue in the poultry-yards. Now is the time that busy markets are thronged by anxious housewives, who "price" everything, from a boar's head to a rennet apple, in their desire to gratify the tastes and satisfy the appetite of the boys;

now is the time that cooks cunningly compound pies, and tarts, and cakes, and trifles, custards and jellies, posset and punch, lamb's-wool and egg-flip, and are pestered by the boys to let them "stir the pudding." Now is the time that the youngsters skurry up and down stairs in endless gyrations, and peep into every unlocked closet, and make merry over rum-shrub, and roll off to bed at unseasonable hours, half asleep and half awake, to dream of Christmas-trees and pantomimes. Now is the time that Alfred accidentally catches dark-haired Kate under the mistletoe, and Kate throws the handkerchief to Alfred in "kiss-in-the-ring," and Edgar crouches down close to Florence in "hunt-the-slipper," and little flirtations take place in every corner. Now is the time that clowns rush wildly down the stage and grin before the footlights, for the express purpose of repeating that time-honoured formula :—"Here we are again, and how are you?" Now is the time that plum-puddings multiply in every house and smoke on every board, and that the boys act on the old and venerable principle of "cut and come again." Now is the time that Master Johnson mounts a "stand up" collar, and forsakes for a while the boisterous pleasures of "chevy" and "hare and hounds" for the more exalted bliss of declaiming "Casabianca" or "Mark Antony's Oration" in his father's well-lighted drawing-room, to an admiring audience of his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts. Now is the time that pretty girls look their prettiest (all for the boys), and devise such fairy-like combinations of muslin and tarlatan, and twist their curls into such delightful fancies, and smile so sweetly with rosebud lips, and look such looks from beaming eyes, that Tom, and Dick, and Harry are straightway conquered, and become their willing slaves. Now is the time that Fitzboodle executes such astonishing *tours de force* upon flute or violin, that his hearers are lost in wonder how an instrument apparently so unoffending can be guilty of such atrocious inflictions; and now is the time that Laura Brown would sing with pleasure if she had not such a cold. And now is the time that the boys hustle through the house whistling or roaring out choruses from "H.M.S. Pinafore," till the tortured hearers wish that Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., had never risen to be "the head of the Queen's navee!"

We need say no more. We have briefly sketched the happy

life of boys in the country "all round the year" and through each joyous season, fitly concluding with the great holiday-time of Christmas, to which we beg leave to dedicate the following unpretending verses:—

O season sweet of loving, tender faces,
Of old friends gathering at old trysting-places,
Of sparkling eyes and innocentest blisses,
Of whispered nothings and of stolen kisses !
O happy time, when the old greybeard jolly
Lifts his green crown of mistletoe and holly,
While Yule logs crackle on the earth, and fleet
The merry hours pass by with winged feet,
That seem in their soft motion to keep time
With silver bells that ring the Christmas chime !
O happy time of revelries and joys,
Dear to the bounding hearts of England's Boys !

But give one thought, I pray you, to that night
When on Chaldean pastures streamed the light,
The herald star that told to wond'ring earth
The secret of our Lord's mysterious birth.
Then, mindful of the mercy Heaven shows,
As ye would be forgiven, forgive your foes ;
Stretch forth the liberal hand, and share your store
With the world's outcasts, with the sick and poor ;
So shall your mirth the merrier, purer be
When ye are gathered round the Christmas-tree !

And now, in conclusion, for a few suggestions. If the boy be possessed with a warm love of nature, he will never, as I have said, be at a loss for sources of enjoyment. They lie around him thickly ; commonplace pleasures, it may be, but sufficient for any feeling heart and healthy mind. The freshness of the pure air as it passes over field and wood is in itself a delight. There is a joy in the whole cycle of the seasons ; in the changes of spring and summer, and autumn and winter ; in the early greenness of the trees, and their later richness of colouring ; in the flush of roses in June, and the whiteness of the snowy hills in December. These things are an exquisite happiness to the boy, and, when time has furrowed his brow and silvered his hair, they bring back to him the boy's heart. A true lover of nature recalls the keen sense of bliss, the abounding ecstasy, with which, on his half-holidays, he wandered up long lanes which sheltered between high mossy banks, and across runnels that sparkled in the shade of over-

hanging honeysuckled hedges, and into the depths of cool woods where the ringdove had built her nest. He remembers the clump of stately elm-trees where the chaffinch piped her song all through the summer afternoon, and the patch of hawthorn which blossomed earlier than any other, and the nook where the wild rose-briar sent out its sweetest perfume. He remembers the grove where the cuckoo filled every echo with his "minor third," and the hazel coppice where the squirrels feasted daintily on the milk-white kernels of the ripening nuts. He does not forget the days when he hunted the banks and the hedgerows for wild violets, or the meadows where he gathered the first cowslips. As in a picture he sees the old orchard which he loved so well, deckt with its May-bloom of pink and white ; and the shining mill-stream, babbling among the alders, where a certain wary old trout so constantly evaded his well-baited hook ; and the quaint manor-house pleasaunce, where he would linger on bright winter days to hear the redbreast sing

" Betwixt the tufts of snow in the bare branch
Of mossy apple tree ; "

and the stile at the corner of the village graveyard, where he sat o' summer nights, charmed by the lusty music of the old church-bells. It is in this sense that "things of beauty" are "joys for ever." Impressed upon the boy's memory, they gladden and refresh the imagination of the man. The scenes he frequented in his boyhood rise again and again before the "mind's eye ;" the songs he heard he hears once more ; the emotions that then swelled within his bosom revive at the thought of his early days :—

" All sadness from his heart is gone—
All sadness and all fear ! "

A boy once more, he revisits his boyhood's scenes, and recalls all that he felt and knew of tenderest, truest enjoyment in the flush and promise of his young life.

Yes, keep your eyes open, and you will be always learning, always observing something that you never observed before. You cannot exhaust nature ; no, though you live as long as Old Parr or Harry Jenkins, or any other master of the art of longevity, she will beat you in the end. And don't think you

need go up Mont Blanc, or into a tropical forest, or across the seas to a coral island, to search for objects of interest. The nearest pond, or hedgerow, or copse will provide you with occupation for a good deal of your leisure. Or the rookery in the trees down yonder by the church. I, for one, am very fond of watching its black-feathered inhabitants. People say "as wise as an owl," but I never could discover wherein lay the wisdom of that moping hermit, and prefer to say "as wise as a rook." And if there be any truth in the adage which connects wisdom with early rising, the rook's intelligence is quite accounted for. He is really and truly the early bird that catches the first worm. The lark is up early, singing her most melodious song at heaven's high gate, but the rook is up before her. Long before sunrise he leaves his perch and sails away through the fresh cool air to gather in provision for himself and his feathered family. The farmer regards him with suspicion. Alas! the best of us are exposed to the carps and cavils of those who do not or will not understand us, and the rook only suffers as we do. But the farmer has no good cause of complaint. Grubs, grubs, grubs! such are the rook's daily food, and he takes just a new potato or an ear or two of corn as a relish to so much animal food. I should like to know where the farmer's crops would be without him! Think of the worms and caterpillars he kills, digging them up from the soil where they are destroying the roots of the grasses. Think of this, Mr. Farmer, and give your black friend a welcome whenever you see him. Why, he wears away the feathers of his face by constantly thrusting his strong bill into the loose soil to do you service.

Let me give you a proof of his shrewdness. He knows as well as you do when you intend to cut down the tree where he has built his nest. He does not wait for the sound of the axe. As soon as he notes that a piece of bark has been removed from a tree—that the tree has been "scored" as an indication to the woodcutter—he is off. He desists at once from building on it or dwelling in it.

He is a great stickler for the laws of property, or at least he holds that possession is nine parts of the law. He and his mate keep to the tree, year after year, which they first made their home on starting in life as a married couple. Youngsters are born to them and duly bred, and go out to

seek their living as their parents have done, but the old birds cling to the old house at home. And among themselves the rooks insist that honesty is the best policy. A young pair are constructing a nest, when the wind swells into a gale and scatters abroad their "household sticks." Instead of going on the hunt for a fresh supply, they appropriate some sticks from a nest close at hand, which they think the old birds can very well spare. Not a bit of it. Young birds must learn the difference between *meum* and *tuum*, and the bird that has been despoiled immediately lays her complaint before the executive or administrative council. They listen with patience to her story, they communicate to one another their views of it, and finally they deliver their verdict. Off they speed to a neighbouring tree, and in a few moments have scattered the dishonest nest to the wind. I don't profess to know the articles of the penal code in force in Rookland, but I am sure that wrongdoing always meets with summary punishment, and that contumacious offenders are driven into enforced exile.

To show you what food for thought lies within your reach, let me refer to the drops or "gouts" of froth which, in the later summer, may be seen on the plants in our hedgerows. The country children call this saliva-like substance cuckoo-spit, but of course the cuckoo has nothing to do with it. Remove it from the stem or spray to which it adheres, and you will find beneath it an insect of a very pale green colour, about the fifth of an inch long, with traces of rudimentary wings. With a miniature proboscis it feeds on the juices of the plant, and afterwards exudes them from the hind part of its body in tiny glutinous bubbles, thus forming for itself a frothy coating to hide it from its enemies. This insect is the grub of the *Tettix*, or *Cicada spumarea*, sometimes called the frog-hopper, from the supposed resemblance of the perfect insect (which is of a pale brown colour) to the frog.

The pond in the corner of yonder field is a world in itself, a world full of life, a world where the struggle for existence is constantly being fought; and if you regard it with careful eyes, you will be surprised at its wealth of interest. Do you see on the leaf of that water-plant a beetle of deep olive hue, with shining wing-cases (*elytra*) of a bluish tint, and a breast covered with yellow down? It is called the black water-beetle, and is a truly aquatic species, generally residing in the

water, though at even-tide it will take a short flight on land. The female is furnished with abdominal glands which secrete a kind of glutinous fluid, capable of being spun out into delicate white silken threads. These threads she weaves into a cocoon of a circular shape, with an upright projection on one side; the exterior hardens speedily, and, from the gummy character of its surface, is water-tight. Inside the cocoon are placed the eggs, varying in number from fifty to sixty, and the cocoon itself is attached to the stem or leaf of a water-plant. In the hot summer weather the eggs are hatched in little more than a fortnight, but at other times the larvæ do not make their appearance in less than six weeks. They leave the cocoon in a few hours, and grow very rapidly. Each larva or grub has a horny head, and at the other end of its long body two little appendages, through which it draws in its needful supplies of air. For this purpose, and also for entrapping into its curved jaws the tiny molecules and shelly insects which form its prey, it frequently rises to the surface of the water. In its larval stage it remains for about sixty days, during which period it casts its skin three times, increasing in size after each operation until it attains the length of three inches.

I have found the caddis-worm an entertaining object of study. Any boy who has taken the trouble to look into a pond—of course, I do not mean a very muddy one—must have noticed at the bottom the queer spectacle of bits of straw and strips of leaf and shell, like tubes, moving to and fro with much activity. Probably he has just looked at them and no more, has not even inquired what they are or mean. Well, those are the larvæ of caddis-flies, carrying about their portable houses, of which they themselves have been the builders, and out of which they are careful to protrude only their head and the first three rings or segments of their body. The caddis grub or larva, before it goes into the pupa or chrysalis state, protects the outside of its body, which is lodged, I must explain, in a kind of silken tube, by fastening upon it fragments of various materials, leaves, small sticks, slips of straw, roots, shells of molluscs, grains of sand, tiny pebbles, and the like, according to the nature of the locality it inhabits. Sometimes the ingenious little worker falls in with *two scraps of the stem of a reed, bruised and split length-*

wise, and should it as yet have adorned its sheath only with small materials, so that it is neither strong enough nor large enough, it makes a capital overcoat with these pieces of reed, drawing them together as closely as possible. It consults strength and buoyancy rather than elegance in its work, so that the appearance of some of the tubes is often very grotesque. Should the tube be too heavy to float, its hidden inmate adds a hollow straw or bit of light wood until the specific gravity is equalised. As a protection, says Paterson, from the attacks of its enemies, and at the same time to provide for the admission of the water essential to its existence, it adopts an ingenious device. Across each extremity of its domicile it fixes a kind of grating, which serves the double purpose of respiration and defence. The grating is formed of a strong description of silk, which the animal has the power of spinning, and under the water assumes the necessary consistency. Sometimes it is composed of a mass of minute portions of vegetable matter, so thick as almost to exclude water, with two holes at the sides of the case, close to the extremity, for the ingress of the fluid. At other times you will see that numerous tiny little shells have been glued together, and as their convexity leaves vacant places between them, the object of the grating is attained by a different procedure.

The portion of the caddis-worm's body enclosed in its movable sheath is soft like that of a caterpillar, but the head and shoulders, which are exposed to the risk of collision with hard substances, are defended by a horny integument. Prior to its metamorphosis into a pupa it retires into its house, which is then protected by the double grating already described, and falls into a torpid condition. In due time it awakens into motion, throws off its case, which splits for the purpose, and with four beautiful hairy wings flutters over the surface of the pond.

The chameleon-fly, the dragon-fly, the water-gnat, the whirligig-beetle, each and all of them will repay examination; and so, too, the quaint little water boatman, which may be seen sitting on the surface of the water, as if to bask in the sunshine. In form this insect, as its name implies, is like a boat, with the head almost as broad as the rest of the body; the *ore legs*, with which it catches its food, are strong and curved; *the hind*, which act as oars, are greatly elongated and feathered

at the extremities. Its wings are of considerable strength, and enable it to fly about on land with the utmost ease. It always swims on its back, a position which is convenient for the capture of small insects that fall into the water. It does not eat its prey, but clasping it with its fore legs, thrusts its beak into its body, and, after absorbing its juices, leaves the empty shell to float upon the surface.

Or the butterfly, that "winged flower," that "child of the "sunshine," that "living gem:" do those boys who so eagerly hunt them and preserve them in little stifling paper-cases—do those boys, I wonder, ever bethink them of all the wonders of their insect captives? Look at the number of species which brighten our English fields and pastures: as, for example, the swallow-tail and the green-veined white, and the orange-tip white, the pearl-bordered fritillary, the Bedford blue, the mazarine blue; or, later in the summer, the tortoiseshell, the magnificent peacock butterfly, the rare Camberwell beauty, the graceful white admiral, and the gorgeous purple emperor. The caterpillar from which each species springs has its own peculiar habitat and food. Thus, that of the tortoiseshell feeds on the leaves of the elm and the willow; that of the peacock on the nettle; that of the hawthorn butterfly on the fragrant Maybush; while the brimstone or sulphur butterfly, one of the earliest comers, springs from a larva that feeds on the berry-bearing alder and the buckthorn. Butterflies must not be confounded, as ignorant persons are apt to confound them, with the hawkmoths or moths; the difference is easily seen in their antennæ, those of the butterflies being always clubbed. By knowing the plants on which their larvæ feed, you can tell with some degree of certainty the localities in which you will find certain species. There are some which frequent the woods and shrubberies; others confine their airy rambles to the open heaths; others love the green lanes that lie in the shadow of lofty elms; while not a few species are limited to particular counties or districts. Thus, the queen of Spain's fritillary is never seen, I think, out of Kent, Surrey, Cambridge, and Norfolk; the purple emperor never visits the North; the Camberwell beauty is very rarely seen even in the sunny South.

These notes may seem digressive and superfluous, but they are introduced of set purpose, and their object is to show what stores of amusement and instruction are always within our

ken, nay, lie almost under our feet. That habit of observation which effects so much for the due training of our highest faculties may be readily and agreeably cultivated during our walks abroad, and made to contribute largely to our enjoyment, Whether in town or country, we shall always find ample material if we use our eyes—if we do not disdain what are called “common things;” if we remember that the blade of grass in its place and degree is not less wonderful than the great orbs which roll through the endless leagues of space. It is a special fault of boys to under-estimate the value of whatever they acquire without trouble, of whatever lies close at hand and seems to woo the gaze. But this is a fault against which the thoughtful will strive. The things of greatest beauty are often those nearest to us and easiest of access; and Milton’s saying for ever holds true :—

“To know
That which about us lies in daily life
Is the prime wisdom.”





CHAPTER VIII.

HOW AND WHAT TO READ.

"In the course of our reading we should lay up in our minds a store of goodly thoughts in well-wrought words, which should be a living treasure of knowledge always with us, and from which, at various times and amidst all the shifting of circumstances, we might be sure of drawing some comfort, guidance, and sympathy."—SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

Usefulness of reading—Brings us into contact with great men—A taste for reading a constant source of enjoyment—Sir John Herschel—A maxim from Lord Bacon—What to read—Biography—Lessons taught by the lives of the great and good—George Herbert quoted—John Foster—Franklin as an example—The Duke of Buckingham as a warning—Dryden quoted—Plutarch's lives—Biographies that every boy ought to read—The main lesson which they teach set forth by Carlyle—The purpose of life—History—The way in which history should be studied—A course of historical reading suggested—Books of travel—Sir Humphrey Gilbert—Mungo Park—Some famous travellers—Poetry—Lord Bacon and Sir Philip Sidney quoted—Blessings of poetry—Coleridge quoted—The highest type of poet—Tennyson quoted—The best poetry only should be studied—A list of poetical works—Fiction—What should and what should not be read—A rule of conduct—List of novels—Scientific literature—The belles lettres—Theological and devotional literature—Thomas Fuller quoted—The way to read—Todd quoted—Directions.



It is unnecessary that I should inflict on the boys any commonplaces about the usefulness and value of reading. It may be assumed, from their perusal of these pages, that they acknowledge it to be both an agreeable and a profitable occupation. Nor do I know that it is possible to say on such a subject anything wiser or more pertinent than was said by the great Lord Bacon nearly three centuries ago, when he advised that we should read, "not to

contradict and confute, nor to believe or take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider." He added:—"Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not." There is one special advantage in reading; that it brings us into direct intercourse with all the great and good men whose names emblazon the literature of the world. When I read the poems of Milton or the plays of Shakespeare, I seem admitted to the writer's company; it is as if he conversed with me, and poured into my ear his profound thoughts and thick-coming fancies. Again, it reveals to me the life of past generations, and enables me to watch the growth and decay of mighty empires; to learn the progress of great truths and lofty principles. Without reading we should be almost alone in the world, cut off entirely from the historic past of our race, severed from the populations of other lands. What would Greece or Persia, Rome or Carthage, be to us if we never read? And all those sages and heroes and statesmen who have helped to make the world what it is, they would be mere names, empty shadows, to you and me, if by reading we did not learn all about their lives, their sufferings, their achievements. Pursuing this train of reflection, I am compelled to say with Sir John Herschel, that if I were to pray for a taste which should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be through life a source of happiness and contentment, and a shield against its ills whatever misfortunes should befall me, I would pray for a taste for reading. The man who can read, and read wisely, is superior to circumstance. He has always a refuge when the storms of fortune beat against him, a balm for every heartache, a safeguard and security in every peril.

"Give a man this taste," says Sir John Herschel, "and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man, unless, indeed, you put into his hands a most perverse selection of books. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history—with the wisest, the wittiest, with the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a citizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages. The

world has been created for him. It is hardly possible but the character should take a higher and better tone from the constant habit of associating in thought with a class of thinkers, to say the least of it, above the average of humanity. It is morally impossible but that the manners should take a tinge of good-breeding and civilisation from having constantly before one's eyes the way in which the best-bred and best-informed men have talked and conducted themselves in their intercourse with each other. There is a gentle but perfectly irresistible coercion in a habit of reading well directed over the whole tenor of a man's character and conduct, which is not the less effectual because it works insensibly, and because it is really the last thing he dreams of."

Taking it, then, for granted that the boys whom I address are as satisfied as myself of the advantages and pleasures of reading, I may go on to offer some remarks upon the books to be read, and the way in which we should read them. Here we may take another saying of Lord Bacon's as our starting-point:—"Some books," he says, "are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in part, others to be read, but not curiously [*i.e.*, with much attention]; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy [*i.e.*, vapid] things." To this it may be added that some books are not to be read at all. These are profane and indecent books, which can be regarded only as the counters with which the devil plays his game. They are the nets in which he hopes to ensnare the unwary soul. Of these let the reader beware. Touch them not, handle them not. The moment he comes upon a phrase or a sentence that revolts his conscience, let him throw aside the book containing it. We read in order to build up and purify the mind, not to contaminate and weaken it. There may be genius in the book, but the genius cannot neutralise the effect of the infidelity or lewdness, and the young reader must no more think of dragging his intellect through its abominations than he would of wading through a sewer because it was skilfully constructed.

But what books should be and may be read?

First of all, *Biographies*. We cannot fail to profit by the study of the lives of the great and good. "The good life," says George Herbert, "is never out of season;" we can always contemplate it to our advantage; insensibly but surely its influence will tell upon our character. The heroic deeds done by men of true courage—deeds of generosity, unselfishness, valour, humanity, truthfulness—the fine sayings uttered by wise and eloquent lips, how can we be otherwise than better, and purer, and braver for our knowledge of these? A noble life is at once an example and an inspiration; it shows us what we ought to be, and encourages us to strive to realise the ideal.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We may make *our* lives sublime;"

or, if not sublime, at least good, and honest, and useful—a blessing to others as well as to ourselves. Said Dr. George Wilson:—"I read all biographies with intense interest. Even a man without a heart, like Cavendish, I think about, and read about, and dream about, and picture to myself in all possible ways, till he grows into a living being beside me, and I put my feet into his shoes, and become for the time Cavendish, and think as he thought, and do as he did." In this lies the preciousness of biography. It has a personal interest, appeals to our keenest sympathies, "slides" into the current of our blood. It peoples our solitude with friendly faces; it makes us familiar with the best of company. I read Boswell, and straightway I know as much about Johnson as he did. Carlyle introduces us to the man Cromwell; we see him as his contemporaries saw him. Characters stand revealed before us in all their littleness and all their greatness; and we know at once what to imitate and what to avoid, what to admire and what to condemn. For, be it observed, that in our biographical studies it must always be our endeavour to make them subserve our general culture, to use them as a means of education. Hence, we must consider carefully the temper, disposition, tastes, failings, special virtues, and prominent qualities of the men whom biography introduces to us. For example, we are reading the life of Benjamin Franklin. Well, what strikes us as his distinguishing merit or as the governing principle of his conduct? We

should say his practical common sense, his love of the useful. So says John Foster:—"The useful was to him the *summum bonum*, the supreme good, the sublime and beautiful, which it may not perhaps be extravagant to believe he was in quest of every week for half a century, in whatever place, or study, or practical undertaking. No department was too plain or too humble for him to occupy himself in for this purpose; and in affairs of the most ambitious order this was still systematically his object. Whether in directing the construction of chimneys or of constitutions, lecturing on the saving of candles or on the economy of national revenues, he was still intent on the same end, the question always being how to obtain the most of solid tangible advantage by the plainest and easiest means." We want a contrast. If so, we find it in the second Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, Charles the Second's profligate courtier. It is probable that his natural gifts were much larger than those of Franklin; he had wit of a high order, a quick perception, great fertility of resource, vast and various talent. But he had no sense of utility; he despised the practical, and he frittered his powers away on useless enterprises, or degraded them to be the ministers of his passions. We find him put before us in a life-like sketch by the poet Dryden:—

"A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:
Then all for woman, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who would every hour employ
With something new to wist or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both to show his judgment in extremes. . . .
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,
He had his jest, and they had his estate."¹

¹ The reader may be reminded that Sir Walter Scott has painted the Duke with much vigour in his "Peveril of the Peak," and that Pope has satirised him in some bitter lines beginning—

"In the worst inn's worst room."

Macaulay briefly says of him that he was a sated man of pleasure who turned to ambition as a pastime. As at one time he "tried to amuse

We have abundant proofs in literary records of the powerful influence of biographical studies conducted in this spirit. We know, for instance, how strongly the youthful intellect of Napoleon was affected by his perusal of the lives of the heroes of antiquity. Henry Martyn became a missionary through reading the Lives of Henry Brainerd and Dr. Carey. Coleridge was not a little indebted to the Life of John Wesley. Alfieri's literary faculty was awakened by his perusal of Plutarch. "I read," he said, "the Lives of Timoleon, Cæsar, Brutus, Pelopidas, more than six times, with cries, with tears, and with such transports that I was almost furious." Jourdain, the orientalist, was induced to enter upon the study of the Eastern languages by the example of Anquetil du Perron. Franklin's career was considerably swayed by his study of Plutarch's "Lives." In this way the torch of knowledge is passed from hand to hand, and never suffered to die out. Each great man has his disciples, his admirers, who look up to him with reverence, and endeavour to imitate his example.

We have incidentally referred to Plutarch's "Lives." This is a book which most boys read, which *all* boys *should* read. Montaigne justly speaks of him as the greatest master in the biographic kind of writing; and the skill is wonderful with which he puts before us really life-like presentments of his heroes. He was the favourite author of Turenne, of Napoleon, of Schiller, and thousands of minds have drank inspiration from his pages, and learned to cultivate the virtues of endurance, generosity, and patience. There is an admirable edition by Clough, to which we may direct the young reader's attention. Along with Plutarch he may read Charles Kingsley's "Heroes," a book vividly written, and replete with noble lessons. Descending to later times and our own country, we would recommend Cavendish's "Life of Wolsey;" Roper's "Life of More;" Boswell's "Johnson;" Lockhart's "Scott," a charming biography, from which the reader may derive some valuable suggestions; Forster's "Life of Goldsmith," and his "Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth;" and Southey's Lives of Wesley and Nelson. These biographies

himself with architecture and music, with writing farces and with seeking for the philosopher's stone, so at another he tried to amuse himself with a secret negotiation and a Dutch war.

are noticeable for the admirable manner in which they are written, and consequently possess a twofold interest. Some of our greatest men have not been fortunate in their historians; as, for instance, Marlborough and Chatham, Strafford and Walpole. Though frequently infelicitous, and even unjust in criticism, Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" has a certain fascination for the reader. Excellent in execution, and instinct with moral value, are the lives of Dr. Arnold by Dean Stanley, and of F. W. Robertson by Stopford Brooke. We may also put forward, without any pretensions to order, Sir Arthur Help's Lives of Pizarro, Hernando Cortes, and Christopher Columbus (there is a very readable life of the great discoverer by Washington Irving); Macaulay's Lives of Clive and Warren Hastings; Hepworth Dixon's "Life of Blake;" Michelet's "Life of Luther;" Roscoe's "Lorenzo de Medici" and "Leo X." (though these are almost put out of court by Von Reumont and Ranke); Irving's "Life of Washington;" Scott's "Life of Napoleon" (which may be supplemented by Lanfrey's); Brialmont's "Life of Wellington;" Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs of her husband, Colonel Hutchinson; and Miss Meteyard's "Josiah Wedgewood."

What is the broad lesson impressed upon the mind by these lives of men of genius? To us it seems finely and emphatically embodied in the following words by Thomas Carlyle:—

"Amongst these men," he says, "are to be found the brightest specimens and the chief benefactors of mankind. It is they that keep awake the finer parts of our souls, that give us better aims than power or pleasure, and withstand the total sovereignty of mammon in this earth. They are the vanguard in the march of mind—the intellectual backwoodsmen, reclaiming from the idle wilderness new territories for the thought and the activity of their happier brethren. Pity that from all their conquests, so rich in benefit to others, themselves should reap so little! But it is vain to murmur. They are volunteers in this cause; they weighed the charms of it against the perils, and they must abide the results of their decision, as all must. The hardships of the course they follow are formidable, but not all inevitable; and to such as pursue it rightly, it is not without its great rewards. The history of genius has, in fact, its bright side as well as its dark. And if it is distressing to survey the misery, and, what is worse, the debase-

ment, of so many gifted men, it is doubly cheering, on the other hand, to reflect on the few who, amid the temptations and sorrows to which life in all its provinces, and most in theirs, is liable, have travelled through it in calm and virtuous majesty, and are now hallowed in our memories not less for their conduct than their writings. Such men are the flower of this lower world; to such alone can the epithet of great be applied with its true emphasis. There is a congruity in their proceedings which one loves to contemplate; he who would write heroic poems should make his whole life a heroic poem."

But whether we write heroic poems, or make dull entries in a ledger, or "engross deeds," it should be our aim and endeavour to make our *lives* "heroic poems;" that is, to scorn the base, the false, and the vulgar—to pursue truth, honour, chastity, virtue—to respond to all devout thoughts and obey all impulses of good.

In this aim and endeavour the study of biography in our youth will greatly help us. "All knowledge which alters our lives," says George Eliot, "penetrates us more when it comes in the early morning: the day that has to be travelled with something new, and perhaps for ever sad in its light, is an image of the life that spreads beyond." Boys are generally fond of biography, but they do not make a good choice of examples. They waste too much time on feeble and improbable lives of pirates, buccaneers, and the like, attracted by the atmosphere of romance and adventure which surrounds them. But if they want romance and adventure, they will find it in the lives of discoverers and explorers like Cook and Bruce and Livingstone; in the lives of great warriors and sea-kings; in the lives of martyrs who have died for their religion, and patriots who have bled for their country. Truth is strange, stranger than fiction. How vastly more interesting the "*Lives of the Queens of England*" by Miss Strickland, or the lives of Drake and Raleigh, Cavendish and Dampier, than all the vamped-up memoirs of highwaymen and rovers which ever issued from a degraded press! From the latter what can be learned? Do they enforce a single truth? Do they suggest to the mind one thought of loftiness or one image of beauty? Do they throw any light on the history of past times? *Are they not simply and absolutely rubbish?*

From biography we turn naturally to *History*, which does for the life of nations what biography does for the life of men. It is the key which opens up to us the treasures of the past, and a wealth of wisdom may be his who uses it judiciously. Each great event carries with it its lesson; each reform or revolution will teach us something if we are but willing to learn. As we are borne down the stream of time, through what strange scenes, what wonderful regions, we find ourselves passing! But history, if it is to become an aid to our moral and intellectual development, must be studied with a method. The young student must begin by acquiring some idea of the ground which he has to traverse. Let us suppose, for example, that he desires to gain a tolerably complete acquaintance with the history of his own country, which must always be more interesting to him than that of any other. He should study it first in some concise but comprehensive manual, such as the "Student's Hume," or, better still, Mr. Green's "Short History of the English People." As he reads he observes into what periods English history naturally divides itself, and afterwards proceeds to study each period separately. We are writing for boys, and therefore shall name only such books as boys (*adolescentes*, however, rather than *pueri*) may be reasonably expected to read "with understanding." Well, then, for the earlier annals of Old England, the guide is Mr. E. A. Freeman, with his "History of the Norman Conquest." Like all historians, he has a "theory," and is sometimes apt to press it unduly; but he it is who first made Englishmen understand the *continuity* of their history, who taught them that there were Englishmen *before* the Conquest as well as after, who explained and adjusted the Conquest in its true proportions. His style is always forcible, sometimes picturesque, and rises into eloquence in such passages as the descriptions of the death of the Conqueror and the battle of Senlac (Hastings). For the reign of Henry the Second our boys should consult Lord Lyttelton's "History," along with the Life of Thomas à Becket (or Beket) in Dean Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury," Canon Robertson's "Life of Becket," and the article on Becket in Mr. Freeman's "Historical Essays." We must not forget the assistance to be derived, not only in this reign but throughout the reigns of the Plantagenets, from Professor Stubbs' "Constitutional History," a marvel of philosophical

insight and accurate erudition. Mr. Pearson's "History of England" will carry us over the reigns of John and Henry the Third, and the latter may be illustrated from Mr. Prothero's "Life of Simon de Montfort," Dr. Pauli's biography of that noble patriot, and Mr. Blaauw's "Barons' War."

Edward the First has found a sympathetic biographer in the author of "The Greatest of the Plantagenets," and Professor Stubbs is still an invaluable companion and director. We may also refer for Scottish affairs to Mr. Hill Burton's "History of Scotland." For Edward the Third's long and stirring reign we may take the quaint pages of Joshua Barnes, and the more trustworthy work of Mr. William Longman ("History of Edward the Third"); while its chivalrous aspects are shown to us with singular vividness by the old chronicler, Froissart. For Henry IV. and Henry V. we may depend upon Lord Brougham's "History of England under the House of Lancaster," Dr. Lingard's exact and sober "History of England," and Sir Harris Nicolas's interesting "History of the Battle of Agincourt." Our historical survey brings us next to the dreary Wars of the Roses; and here we take as our guide Mr. James Gairdner's "Richard the Third," along with Miss Halstead's apologetic Life of that much-abused monarch, or, if we are not repelled by quaintness of diction, Sir George Buck's laudatory biography. Habington's "Life of Edward the Fourth" should be read for its stateliness of style. Sir Thomas More and Lord Bacon are both available for the early Tudor period, which, as it witnessed the growth of the new learning, or the Renaissance, needs to be carefully studied. The literature of the age is carefully examined in Mr. Hallam's "Literature of Europe."

The reign of Henry VIII. has had many historians, beginning with Hall and Holinshed, and ending with Froude. The latter's brilliant work belongs to the modern school of history: it abounds in picturesque detail, and is written with a full and fervid eloquence; but the writer's one-sidedness needs to be constantly remembered. We would also recommend the historical sketches prefixed by Professor Brewer to his "Calendars of State Papers," and Dean Hook's "Life of Archbishop Cranmer," with Cavendish's Life of his master Wolsey, and Cresacre More's "Life of Sir Thomas More." *The history of the Reformation* may be read in Froude's

"History," Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" (corrected by Maitland's "Essays on the Reformation"), and Bishop Burnet's "History."

We come to the stirring era of Elizabeth, and find ourselves confronted by a host of authorities. Mr. Green's narrative of the great Queen's reign is one of the most vividly written portions of his larger "History of the English People," and should be read in conjunction with Mr. Froude's volumes. For her relations to Mary Queen of Scots, see Mr. Burton's "History of Scotland" and Mr. Hosack's recent "Apologia." See, also, for the general history, Lingard, Hallam, and Motley's "History of the United Netherlands." The great writers of this golden age are contained in Hallam's "Literary History," G. C. Craik's "History of English Literature," and Henri Taine's eloquent but paradoxical volumes. Round Shakespeare alone has gathered a vast literature, the outskirts of which the boy can hardly be expected to touch. He should find time, however, to read Charles Knight's "Shakespeare: a Biography," Schlegel's "Lectures on Shakespeare," and Professor Edward Dowden's "Shakespeare: His Mind and Art." For Spenser he may take Dean Church's admirable monograph. Sir Philip Sidney has found competent biographers in Mr. Fox Bourne and the Rev. Julius Lloyd. The maritime enterprise of the Elizabethan seamen may be studied in Sir John Barrow's "Life of Francis Drake," and Hakluyt's collection of voyages. Much interesting matter will be found in Miss Lucy Aikin's "Memoirs of the Court of Elizabeth," and in Miss Strickland's Life of Elizabeth in her "Queens of England;" while foremost among the critical historians must be placed Ranke, with his "History of England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries."

The death of Elizabeth closed the old order, and in the reign of James I. we see the foundations of the new order laid by robust hands. Reference should be made to Hallam's "Constitutional History," and specially to Mr. S. R. Gardiner's "History of England from the Accession of James I.," for the chief events of this period of transition. Mr. Hepworth Dixon has told the story of Lord Bacon's life in a popular manner, and Mr. Spedding with much elaborateness. The "Life of Sir Walter Raleigh," by Mr. Tytler, will be found

useful. Coming to the important period of the Civil War, we find ourselves received by a legion of helpers, among whom Mr. S. R. Gardiner, with his "*Personal History of Charles I.*," Carlyle, with his "*Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*," Forster, with his "*Statesmen of the Commonwealth*," and Guizot, with his "*History of the Revolution in England*," must be placed foremost. For its brilliant character-portraits the Earl of Clarendon's "*History of the Great Rebellion*" will always be read. As secondary assistants, we may name Brodie's "*History of the British Empire*," Dr. Vaughan's "*Protectorate of Cromwell*," Forster's "*Grand Remonstrance*" and "*Arrest of the Five Members*," Sanford's "*Illustrations of the Great Rebellion*," and Dixon's "*Life of Robert Blake*." There are, of course, valuable contemporary authorities, such as Herbert, Whitelock, Warwick, Baillie, Ludlow, Mrs. Hutchinson, and May's "*History of the Long Parliament*;" but to these, or to the "*Calendars of State Papers*" for the period, we can hardly expect many boys to direct their attention. They will read with interest, however, the admirable biographies by Clement Markham of Sir Thomas Fairfax, and by Eliot Warburton of Prince Rupert. Professor Masson's *Life of John Milton* brims over with miscellaneous information. For the last years of Cromwell I know no better authority than M. Guizot in his "*Cromwell and the Republic*."

At the Restoration we accept Lord Macaulay as our guide, and the young reader will devour his rich pictorial pages with eager interest. He has his faults of prejudice and exaggeration, and his style wearies a cultivated taste by the monotony of its metallic brilliancy, but still he remains at the head of the new school of historians, the writers who have made history as exciting and as absorbing as fiction. We may read along with him Mr. Hallam's "*Constitutional History*," and for the social life of the period the diaries of Pepys and John Evelyn. Lingard continues to be a safe authority; and the reader will do well to consult Earl Russell's "*Life of Lord William Russell*," Ewald's "*Life of Algernon Sidney*," and W. D. Christie's "*Life of Ashley, First Earl of Shaftesbury*." Macaulay continues to be our guide during the reign of William III., or at least down to the famous Treaty of Ryswick. Then we take up Earl Stanhope's or Mr. Hill Burton's "*History of England under Queen*"

Anne," along with Archdeacon Coxe's "Life of Marlborough," the latter a dry though valuable book. We pass on with the accession of the House of Brunswick to Lord Stanhope's "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht," with Coxe's "Life of Sir Robert Walpole" and Thackeray's "Life of the Earl of Chatham." Wright's "Life of General Wolfe" should also be read; Macaulay's essays on the Elder Pitt, Clive, and Warren Hastings; Captain Trotter's "Life of Warren Hastings," and J. T. Wheeler's or Marshman's "British India."

Coming down to a later generation, we take up Massey's History of England from the accession of George III., with Sir T. Erskine May's "Constitutional History," Macknight's or Morley's "Life of Edmund Burke," Earl Stanhope's "Life of William Pitt," and Earl Russell's "Life and Correspondence of Charles James Fox." For the struggle between England and America, the American authorities are Mr. Bancroft's "History of the United States," and Mr. Jared Sparks's "Life of George Washington." The great war between England and Napoleon has been the *motif* of many able writers. To boys, the most accessible authorities would seem to be Sir Archibald Alison's voluminous "History of Europe," Sir William Napier's stirring "History of the Peninsular War," in which every page seems instinct with the glow of battle, James's "Naval History of England," Southey's "Life of Lord Nelson," Brialmont's "Life of the Duke of Wellington," and George Hooper's account of "Waterloo." A useful epitome of England's naval and military history will be found in Stewart's "Our Redcoats and Bluejackets." Finally, we close our list with Miss Martineau's "History of England from the Peace of 1815," and Mr. Justin M'Carthy's attractive "History of Our Own Times."

In the same manner the boy-reader may pursue his study of European history, but our limits preclude us from furnishing a list of authorities. There are, however, apart from any particular plan of study, certain great historical works with which every well-informed English gentleman is supposed to be conversant; as, for instance, Gibbon's *magnum opus*, "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Dean Merivale's "History of Rome under the Emperors," Grote's "History of Greece" (and Bishop Thirlwall's), Dean Milman's "History of Latin Christianity," Hallam's "History of the

Middle Ages." We may also direct the attention of the studious to such works as Mr. Philip Smith's "History of the World," Ranke's "History of the Popes," Eyre Crowe's "History of France," Bryce's "Holy Roman Empire," Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution." We might easily extend the catalogue, but enough has been said to indicate to the reader the vast extent of the field which lies open to his research. The study of the English language and literature is, however, the necessary complement of the study of English history. Here he will find assistance in Archbishop Trench's "English, Past and Present," Dr. W. Smith's "Manual of English Literature," Morley's "English Writers," and Hallam's "History of Literature." Of a more elementary character is Dr. Stopford Brooke's "Primer of English Literature." A general survey of our writers in prose and poetry will be found in Chambers's "Cyclopædia of English Literature." We may refer the reader also to Morris's "Historical Outlines of English Accidence," and the manuals by the Rev. W. Skeat, J. W. Hales, and Dr. Abbott ("The English of Shakespeare").

Books of travel always occupy an honoured place in the English boy's library. They appeal to that passion for adventure, that love of enterprise, which possesses him so strongly, and partly finds vent in bird-nesting, rowing, swimming, skating, and other athletic pursuits. As might be expected of a nation whose sons have colonised far lands, and planted cities in the wilderness, and startled every seashore with the thunder of their cannon, English literature is specially rich in works of this character. We may begin with Sir John Mandeville and go down to our own contemporaries, Stanley, Cameron, Major Burnaby, Andrew Wilson ("The Abode of Snow"), Wallace ("The Malay Archipelago"), Bates ("The Naturalist on the Amazons"), and Mrs. Brassey ("Voyage in the Sunbeam"). It is one of the privileges of boyhood that it can read narratives of travel with an undulled appetite. Well do I remember the happy hours which I spent on summer afternoons and winter evenings over the stirring pages of "Purchas, his Pilgrims," and Hakluyt's exciting folio collection of the "Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation." Well do I remember the breathless interest with which I accompanied Drake in his voyage round the world, and John Davis in his explorations of the frozen wastes of the Polar Ocean.

Nor have I forgotten—who that has once read it *does* forget?—that touching story of the death of Sir Humphrey Gilbert; how that in the height of the storm he sat calmly in the stern of his little ten-ton ship reading a book, and comforted his shrinking crew with the brave words:—“Be not afraid; heaven is as near to us by water as by land.”

“Alas! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night,
And never more, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.”

Still fresh in my memory are the wonderful stories of Richard Chancellor and John Howell, of Thomas Cavendish, the second English circumnavigator, and Sir Thomas Herbert, the cavalier. How I followed the adventurous career of James Bruce in his exploration of the Abyssinian interior and his journey to the sources of the Blue Nile; how I pored over the records of the deeds of Ledyard, and the brothers Landor, Denham, Clapperton, and Mungo Park! One passage in the last-named's simply written account of his African travels has always moved me greatly. It runs as follows:—

“After the robbers were gone, I sat for some time looking around me with amazement and terror. Whichever way I turned nothing appeared but danger and difficulty. I saw myself in the midst of a vast wilderness, in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone, surrounded by savage animals and men still more savage. I was five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement. All these circumstances crowded at once on my recollection, and I confess that my spirits began to fail me. I considered my fate as certain, and that I had no alternative but to lie down and perish. The influence of religion, however, aided and supported me. I reflected that no human prudence or foresight could possibly have averted my present sufferings. I was indeed a stranger in a strange land, yet I was still under the protecting eye of that Providence who has condescended to call Himself the stranger's friend. At this moment, painful as my reflections were, the extraordinary beauty of a small moss in fructification irresistibly caught my eye. I mention this to show from what trifling circumstances the mind will sometimes derive consolation; for though the whole plant was not larger than the top of one of my fingers, I *could not* contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots

leaves, and capsula without admiration. Can that Being, thought I, who planted, watered, and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after His own image? Surely not. Reflections like those would not allow me to despair. I started up, and, disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards, assured that relief was at hand; and I was not disappointed."

Besides these travellers, the boy will hang delighted over the narrative of Belzoni's discoveries in the rock sepulchres of Egypt, Dr. Clarke's wanderings in Eastern lands, and the Arctic expeditions of Ross, Parry, Franklin, Dr. Kane, Nares, and Nordenskiöld. He will be deeply interested by Sir John Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia," Sir R. Ker Porter's "Travels in Georgia and Babylonia," and the narratives of Lord Macartney's and Lord Amherst's embassies to the court of Pekin. Captain Basil Hall is a writer dear to boys, his travel-books are written with so much brightness, vivacity, and ease. I fear to touch upon later travellers, for their name is legion; still the works of some of the more distinguished have become part and parcel of our English literature. Among these we would enumerate Herman Melville, with his pictures of the South Sea Islands; A. W. Kinglake, with his never-to-be-forgotten "Eöthen;" Sir John Bowring, with his sketches of Siam; Davis, Gutzlaff, Fortune, Wingrove Cooke, all of whom have largely added to our knowledge of the Chinese Empire; John Barrow and Mackenzie Wallace as authorities upon Russia; Captains King and Fitzroy, intrepid voyagers; W. Gifford Palgrave, the Arabian traveller; Burton, Speke, Grant, Sir Samuel Baker, and Livingstone, the pioneers of civilisation in Central Africa.

So far as my experience goes, boys are not great readers of poetry, unless it be lyric or dramatic; and even in the latter case few venture beyond Sir Walter Scott and Shakespeare, with occasional "dips" into Byron and Tennyson. Such spirited rhythmical romances as "Marmion" and "The Siege of Corinth" please them better than the polished gems of Campbell or the exquisite melodies of Shelley. I would recommend them, however, to undertake a comprehensive study of English poetry, assured that they will find it to be

its own exceeding great reward. Their tone of thought will be elevated, their taste refined, their intellectual resources augmented by constant intercourse with our "sweet singers," and they will learn to look upon nature with an observant and understanding eye. As Lord Bacon says:—"Poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation." It gratifies while it exalts, it strengthens while it pleases. Reading a great poem is like standing on a mountain top and feeling the pure breath of heaven upon our brow. "Of all sciences," exclaims Sir Philip Sidney, "is our poet the monarch. For he doth not only show the way, but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way, as will entice any man to enter upon it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should be through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that, full of that taste, you may long to pass farther. He beginneth not with obscure definition, which must blur the margin with interpretations and load the memory with doubtfulness, but he cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with or prepared for the will-enchancing skill of music; and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you—with a tale which holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney-corner; and, pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue, even as the child is often taught to take most wholesome things by hiding them in such other as have a pleasant taste, which if one should begin to tell them the nature of the aloes or rhubarbarum they should receive, would sooner take their physic at their ears than their mouth. So is it in men, most of whom are childish in the best things till they be cradled in their graves. Glad will they be to hear the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas, and, hearing them, must needs learn the right description of wisdom, valour, and justice; which, if they had been barely—that is to say, philosophically—set out, they would sooner they be brought to school again."

Blessings on the poets for the happy hours they have added to our lives, the sweet bright hours when we take refuge from the anxieties and irksomenesses of the work-day world in the ideal regions created by their fertile fancy! Blessings be on them for the noble thoughts which they have enshrined in melodious verse; for the truths and fancies they have drawn

from nature ; for the beautiful light they have cast upon wood and river, glen and pine-clad peak ; for their revelations of the secrets of the human heart ; for the encouragement and the sympathy and the consolation they have given us ! Who shall estimate the amount of our indebtedness to the tender and holy emotions which the poets have infused into their songs ? Who shall calculate the total sum of the pleasure we have derived from their gifts of invention and imagination ? Those sources of good and beauty which lie deep in our humanity the poets bring into light and use, and make clear to us what we are in ourselves and of what we are capable, what we can endure and to what we can aspire. They are the high priests who on the altars of our souls kindle into life the sacred and eternal fire. So is it possible for each of us who shall have made their poetry his constant study to say as Coleridge said :—" It has been to me its own exceeding great reward ; it has soothed my afflictions ; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments ; it has endeared solitude ; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me,"—which in truth we should never discover, the existence of which we should never detect, without the guidance of the poets.

But there are poets—and poets. The highest type has been thus described by Tennyson, himself "a master in Israel :"—

- "The poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.
- "He saw through life and death, through good and ill,
 He saw through his own soul :
The marvel of the everlasting will
 An open scroll
- "Before him lay : with echoing feet he threaded
 The secretest walks of fame :
The viewless arrows of his thought were headed
 And winged with flame,
- "Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,
 And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
 Filling with light

- “ And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
 Them earthward till they lit ;
 Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,
 The fruitful wit,
- “ Cleaving, took root, and springing forth anew
 Where'er they fell, behold,
 Like to the mother plant in sunbeams, grew
 A flower all gold,
- “ And bravely furnished all abroad to fling
 The winged shafts of truth,
 To throng with stately blooms the breathing spring
 Of hope and youth.
- “ So many minds did gird their orbs with beams, |
 Though one did fling the fire ;
 Heaven flowest upon the soul in many dreams
 Of high desire.
- “ Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
 Like one great garden showed,
 And through the wreaths of floating dark upcurled
 Rare sunshine flowed.”

But of poets of this high class the number is not large. There are others deserving of our suffrages as sweet singers who do not attain to such an altitude of inspiration ; and others, again, a third order, who are remembered by an occasional happy effort. Nor are they few who, with some command of metrical powers, have nevertheless nothing of the true poetical faculty. In the first class we place such as Chaucer, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge, Spenser, Keats, Byron, Tennyson, Robert Browning, Mrs. Browning : in the second, Goldsmith, Cowper, Campbell, Collins, Gray, Crabbe, Drayton, Herrick, Cowley, George Herbert, Hood : in the third, the minor minstrels, Carew, Suckling, Waller, Blake, Landor, Mrs. Hemans, Barry Cornwall, Ebenezer Elliott, Mrs. Norton, Christina Rossetti, Jean Ingelow, Thomas Aird, Gerald Massey. A sub-class of the first must be appropriated to such teachers as Samuel Butler and John Dryden ; and another sub-class to our recent or living singers, Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, William Morris, Coventry Patmore, Robert Buchanan, Aubrey de Vere, Clough, Archbishop Trench, Lord Houghton.

Boys should begin by cultivating a love of the best poetry. They will learn enough of such spirited rhetoric as Campbell's "Hohenlinden" and Scott's "Death of Marmion" in the way of school recitations; let them in their leisure feed upon "celestial food." I do not expect them to be able to read such grand poetical works as Spenser's "Faery Queen," or Wordsworth's "Laodamia," or Tennyson's "Two Voices," at the first time with *full* intelligence. Careful and patient study is needed, thoughtful weighing of stanzas, lines, and phrases, a close examination of the argument pursued and the similes made use of. But let them not be discouraged at a primary failure; if they persevere, their success will be complete, and they will be amply recompensed for their patient labour. Let them resolutely master the entire meaning and beauty of each poem they take up before they pass on to another. They may begin, if they will, with the poet's lighter pieces; with Shelley's lyrics before they attempt his "Alastor" or his "Prometheus Bound;" with Tennyson's English "Idylls" before they adventure upon his "In Memoriam." And let them avail themselves of all the good, sound, scholarly criticism at their command, such as the essays and reviews of Hazlitt, Jeffrey, Coleridge, Taine, Morley, Hallam, Brimley, R. H. Hutton, Matthew Arnold, J. R. Lowell, and others. Let them consider the relation in which each poet stood to his time, the extent to which he was influenced by his predecessors, the extent to which he influenced those who followed him.

It is unnecessary that I should give a list of the great English poets. Their works are all easily accessible in collections such as Bell's, Anderson's, Chalmers's, Gilfillan's, and the Aldine series, or in separate editions, generally brought out under the care of some competent critic. But there are certain poems with which I think every English gentleman should be familiar, and this familiarity can seldom be acquired except in boyhood. Of those masterpieces which the world will not willingly let die, which are the glory of our literature, I will attempt an enumeration, though conscious that I shall make omissions which, in the judgment of many, ought to be recognised, and that I shall introduce some the right of which to "honourable mention" will by many be denied.

Chaucer (d. 1400).—"The Canterbury Tales," or at least "The Knight's Tale," "The Clerk's Tale," "The Man of Law's Tale," "The Nun's and Priest's Tale," and the "Merchant's Tale." (See "Chaucer Modernised," and Dryden's version of some of the poet's tales.)

George Herbert (1593-1633).—"The Temple."

Richard Crashaw (1615-1650).—"Music's Duel" (the inimitable description of a rivalry between a nightingale and a musician).

Robert Herrick (1591-1674).—"The Hesperides" (selections from). As a lyricist, this seventeenth-century poet has been surpassed only by Shelley and Tennyson.

Sir John Denham (1615-1668).—"Cooper's Hill." Dr. Johnson designates this poet as the author of "a species of composition that may be denominated local poetry, of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection or incidental meditation."

John Milton (1608-1674).—"Paradise Lost," "Comus," "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Lycidas."

Edmund Spenser (1553-1599).—"The Faery Queen" (or parts of it. See Leigh Hunt's "Imagination and Fancy.")

William Browne (1590-1645).—"Britannia's Pastorals."

Samuel Butler (1612-1680).—"Hudibras" (or portions of it, say the first three cantos).

John Dryden (1631-1700).—"The Hind and the Panther," "Absalom and Achitophel," "Annus Mirabilis," "Elegy on Mrs. Killigrew."

Alexander Pope (1668-1744).—"The Rape of the Lock," "Essay on Criticism," "Moral Epistles."

Edward Young (1684-1765).—"Night Thoughts."

James Thomson (1700-1748).—"The Seasons."

William Collins (1721-1759).—"Odes on the Passions" and "To Evening."

Thomas Gray (1716-1771).—"Odes," "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," "The Long Story."

Charles Churchill (1731-1764).—"The Rosciad."

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784).—"The Vanity of Human Wishes."

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774).—"The Deserted Village," "The Traveller."

William Cowper (1731-1800).—"The Task," "Conversation," "Table-Talk," "John Gilpin," "On his Mother's Picture."

George Crabbe (1754-1832).—"The Village," "Parish Register," "The Borough," "Tales in Verse," "Tales of the Hall."

Samuel Rogers (1763-1805).—"Italy," "Human Life."

William Blake (1757-1827).—"Songs of Innocence."

William Wordsworth (1770-1850).—"Ode to Duty," "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," "Tintern Abbey," "To a Highland Girl," "Laodamia," "The White Doe of Rylstone Hall," "We are Seven," &c. "The Excursion" and "The Prelude" are works which will be best understood and relished when boyhood has passed into manhood.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834).—"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," "Hymn to Mont Blanc," "Christabel," "Genevieve," "YOUTH"

and Age," "Ode to the Departing Year," "Love, Hope, and Patience in Education."

Robert Southey (1774-1843).—"Curse of Kehama," "Thalaba," "The Holly Tree."

Thomas Moore (1779-1852).—"Irish Melodies," "Paradise and the Peri."

Thomas Campbell (1771-1844).—"Lyrics."

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832).—"Marmion," "Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Lady of the Lake," "Rokeby."

Lord Byron (1788-1824).—"Childe Harold," "Sardanapalus," "Manfred," "The Corsair," "Lara," "Siege of Corinth."

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822).—"Alastor," "The Sensitive Plant," "The Cloud," "To a Skylark."

John Keats (1795-1821).—"Endymion," "Hyperion," "Odes to a Nightingale and a Greek Urn," "Eve of St. Agnes," "Isabel," "Sonnet."

James Montgomery (1771-1854).—"The Pelican Island."

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859).—"Sword and Pen," "Legend of Rimini," "The Palfrey."

Mrs. Hemans (1793-1835).—"Minor Poems." An excellent selection is published in one volume.

Bryan Waller Proctor, or "Barry Cornwall" (1790-1874).—"English Songs."

Robert Burns (1759-1806).—"Cotter's Saturday Night," "Tam O'Shanter," "Selected Songs."

James Hogg (1770-1835).—"The Queen's Wake."

Thomas Hood (1798-1845).—"Lay of the Midsummer Fairies," "Eugene Aram," "Haunted House," "Hero," "Leander," "Miss Kilmansegg."

Henry W. Longfellow (1807).—"Hiawatha," "Evangeline," "Miscellaneous Poems."

Charles Mackay (1814).—"Egeria," "Songs and Ballads."

Alfred Tennyson (1810).—"Locksley Hall," "Talking Oak," "Dream of Fair Women," "Two Voices," "Vision of Sin," "Maud," "English Idylls," "The Princess," "Idylls of the King," "Harold," "Queen Mary," "In Memoriam."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (d. 1861).—"A Vision of Poets," "The Cry of the Children," "Cowper's Grave," "Bertha in the Lane," "Rhyme of the Duchess May."

Robert Browning (1812).—"Pippa Passes," "Strafford," "Colombe's Birthday," "A Blot on the Scutcheon," "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," "The Ride from Ghent to Aix."

James Russell Lowell (1819).—"The Biglow Papers," "Under the Willows."

Matthew Arnold (1822).—"Empedocles on Etna," "Zohrab and Rustum," "Thyrsis," "Tristram and Iseult."

Algernon Swinburne (1865).—"Atalanta in Calydon."

Robert Buchanan (1841).—"Idylls of Inverburn," "North Coast Poems."

William Morris (1834).—"Life and Death of Jason."

Adelaide Anne Proctor (1825-1869).—"Legends and Lyrics."

Jean Ingelow (1830).—"A Story of Doom," "Winstanley's Lighthouse."

Sir Henry Taylor (1800).—"Philip van Artevelde," "Edwin the Fair," "St. Clement's Eve," "The Eve of the Conquest."

Aubrey de Vere.—"Thomas à Becket," "Alexander the Great."

In compiling this list, I have, of course, endeavoured to bear in mind the tastes and inclinations, and the measure of the intellectual powers, of the boys for whose use it is intended. This consideration will explain the omission of many poems which have attained a permanent reputation. In some cases their difficulty, in others the nature of their subject or their mode of treatment, unfits them for young readers. I believe that boys might read every poem mentioned above, not only without injury, but with exceeding advantage. It must also be observed that, as a general rule, I have not included those poets who have produced no one leading and characteristic work ; but it is unnecessary to say that the boy-reader cannot fail to profit by the study of such singers as Lord Houghton and Archbishop Trench, Miss Christina Rossetti, Gerald Massey, Arthur Hugh Clough (whose "Bothie of Tober-na-vuolich" gives him perhaps a claim to a place in the foregoing list), Coventry Patmore, Winthrop Mackworth Praed, Austin Dobson, Frederick Locker, William Courthope, and others.

I may add, for the benefit of the boys, that they will find choice selections from our best poets in Mr. Palgrave's "Golden Treasury," Archbishop Trench's "Household Book of Poetry," Mr. Davenport Adams's "Golden Book of English Song," and Charles Mackay's "Thousand and One Gems of English Poetry."

There are many parents and guardians who object to fiction, and will not allow their sons to read even novels of the highest merit. We hold that in so doing they are entirely in the wrong. As a matter of fact, all they gain by their austerity is that they encourage surreptitious reading, and it is a serious evil when boys are once accustomed to clandestine practices, when once they begin to have secrets from their parents. The love of romance and adventure is so strong in the boyish nature that it cannot be repressed and *will* have vent ; and to this love "story-books" necessarily appeal. When I reflect on the hearty and innocent enjoyment that in my young days I derived from the works of Marryatt, and Cooper, and Chamier, I have no patience with the austerity that withholds them from our boys. It is true enough that many novels are unwholesome and unprofitable reading, but the best way to keep them out of youthful hands is by putting into them books of a genial and healthy character. Boys will not read

"Ernest Maltravers" or "Cometh up like a Flower" if you give them "Midshipman Easy" and "The Deerslayer." It is also true that unlimited novel-reading is intellectually injurious ; but, so far as my experience goes, this is not an error into which boys generally fall. At all events, it is one against which we can easily guard, and I admit it is one against which we are bound to be vigilant. But, on the whole, the reading of fiction is beneficial, inasmuch as it quickens the imagination, enlivens the fancy, and corrects the taste. Moreover, it is refreshing ; it supplies the mind with a desirable change from hard and laborious studies. A boy does not get up his Latin verses or his algebra worse, but better, for an occasional dip into the pages of Jules Verne, Mayne Reid, Gustave Aimard, Kingston, and Ascott Hope. A boy does not learn evil but good from "Tom Brown's School-Days" and Canon Farrar's "St. Winifred." In all good fiction he will find presented to him such embodiments of virtue as will attract, and of vice as will repel him. He will naturally fasten upon every heroic sentiment, and will drink in, even if unconsciously, every high and beautiful thought. A well-written work of fiction is, as Binney says, an extended parable ; as such it may be read ; every incident and every character may have their lessons ; and they *will* have them, to such as have "ears to hear." Generally speaking, boys read simply for the interest and excitement of the story ; but in so reading they cannot *wholly* escape the beneficial influence of the moral it illustrates and enforces ; just as a man may travel among the mountains for mere amusement, and yet be the better for the invigorating atmosphere he necessarily breathes.

Still a due caution should be exercised in opening up the world of fiction to young readers. In the first place, the character of the boy should be studied. A robust mind can digest what would incapacitate a sensitive or feeble one. To Thompson you may safely give a book that would not fail to have a bad effect upon Johnson. The weaker natures should be led to the perusal of manly and hearty stories, that will strengthen their intellectual and moral condition. Stronger and coarser intellects should be accustomed to books that will help to cultivate and refine their judgment. Secondly, you should see, O parents, that your boys read of the best. As *stoutly as* the most ascetic Puritan do I object to fiction if it

be second-rate. I would not allow my sons, or my daughters either, to range at will over the pastures of the circulating library. I would say to them, "Such and such a book is badly written—bad in conception, bad in execution ; to read it would be loss of time, and, worse, loss of self-respect. Therefore put it aside ; we will have none of it. But here is a story that we shall be the better for reading ; its style will teach us many a lesson in composition ; its aim and purpose will help our hearts and minds ; its sketches of men and manners will inform while they instruct ; this is the book for *us*." And if you begin by accustoming your boys to the best, they will soon turn of their own accord from inferior work. Thirdly, regulate the time for "light reading" (as it is not very happily called). Boys are open to reason, and can easily be made to understand that novel-reading must be accepted as an amusement, not as an occupation ; that it must be confined within strict limits, and not allowed to interfere with graver and more important studies. Fourthly, teach the young reader to read, not, as he is always tempted to do, for "the idle luxury of the story," but in order to observe and appreciate the principles illustrated and the lessons taught. To do this you must at first give up a little of your own time to the work ; but when a boy is once shown the right road he is generally ready enough to keep in it. For example, take "*The Caxtons*," and read it aloud with your son, pausing to show the skill with which the story is constructed, and dwelling on the noble character of the elder Caxton in its generous unselfishness, on the chivalrousness of Captain Roland, on the high sense of honour of the young Pisistratus, and commenting on the vivid contrasts exhibited between English and Australian life.

I venture to draw out a list of novels, which, I think, may be safely put in the hands of boys, always with the caveat that the disposition and temperament must be carefully considered, and that all are not alike suited to all readers. We vary our bills of fare to suit the stomachs of those for whom we cater ; shall we not do as much for the moral and intellectual appetite ? In this list, be it observed, I do not introduce any "boys' stories," as they are usually called. I have no special objection to them, but no special admiration of them. They seem to me vitiated by too great an introduction of the element of the marvellous and improbable. Their heroes are represented as

doing what no boys ever did or could do, and as figuring in scenes in which no boys ever did or could or ought to figure. That such stories exercise a beneficial effect I take leave to doubt, and it is certain that, with a few brilliant exceptions, their literary merits are inconsiderable. At all events, in the following list I endeavour to confine myself almost entirely to the higher class of fiction.

Daniel Defoe (1661-1731).—"Robinson Crusoe," "Adventures of Captain Singleton," "Memoirs of a Cavalier" (which Lord Chatham believed to be a true narrative!), "Journal of the Plague Year."

Samuel Richardson (1689-1761).—"Sir Charles Grandison."

Henry Fielding (1707-1754).—"Amelia."

Tobias George Smollett (1721-1771).—"Humphrey Clinker." I include this book with some hesitancy; but though occasionally coarse, it is not immoral. Of Smollett's other novels it must be owned that they are not addressed *virginibus puerisque*.

Laurence Sterne (1713-1768).—"The Sentimental Journey."

Horace Walpole (1717-1797).—"Castle of Otranto."

Clara Reeve (1723-1803).—"Old English Baron."

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774).—"The Vicar of Wakefield."

Henry Brooke (1706-1783).—"The Fool of Quality" (as edited by Charles Kingsley).

Henry Mackenzie (1745-1831).—"The Man of Feeling."

Frances Burney, Madame D'Arbly (1752-1840).—"Evelina" and "Cecilia."

William Beckford (1760-1844).—"Vathek." "As an Eastern tale," says Lord Byron, "even 'Rasselas' must bow before it."

Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809).—"Hugh Trevor."

Sophia and Harriet Lee (1750-1824; 1766-1851).—"The Canterbury Tales" (works of such merit that their want of popularity is almost inconceivable).

Dr. John Moore (1727-1802).—"Zeluco."

Mrs. Inchbald (1752-1821).—"A Simple Story."

Charlotte Smith (1749-1806).—"The Old English Manor-House."

Mrs. Radcliffe (1764-1823).—"Romance of the Forest," "Mysteries of Udolpho," "The Sicilian Romance," "The Italian." "Mrs. Radcliffe," says Scott, "has a title to be considered as the first poetess of romantic fiction."

William Godwin (1756-1836).—"Caleb Williams," "St. Leon."

Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810).—"Edgar Huntly."

Mrs. Opie (1769-1856).—"Father and Daughter," "Simple Tales," "Temper," "Tales of Real Life."

Anna Maria Porter (1780-1832).—"Hungarian Brothers," "Don Sebastian."

Jane Porter (1776-1850).—"Thaddeus of Warsaw," "The Scottish Chiefs."

Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849).—"Castle Rackrent," "Belinda," "Popular Tales," "Vivian," "The Absentee," "Patronage," "Harington," "Ormond," "Rosamond," "Helen."

Jane Austen (1775-1827).—"Sense and Sensibility," "Pride and Prejudice," "Mansfield Park," "Emma," "Persuasion."

Mrs. Brunton (1778-1818).—"Self-Control," "Discipline."

Elizabeth Hamilton (1758-1816).—"The Cottagers of Glenburnie."

Lady Morgan (1783-1859).—"The Wild Irish Girl," "O'Donnel," "The O'Briens and the O'Flahertys."

Mrs. Shelley (1797-1851).—"Frankenstein," "Valperga," "The Last Man."

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832).—No selection is necessary here; *all* Scott's novels are for boys as well as men.

John Galt (1779-1839).—"The Annals of the Parish," "Sir Andrew Wylie," "The Provost," "The Entail," "Lawrie Todd." The last is specially a boy's book, from its adventurous incidents.

Thomas Hope (1770-1861).—"Anastasius."

John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854).—"Valerius," "Reginald Dalton."

Professor Wilson (1785-1854).—"Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," "Trials of Margaret Lyndsay."

Mrs. Johnstone (1781-1857).—"Clan Albyn."

Captain Hamilton (1789-1842).—"Cyril Thornton."

Miss Ferrier (1782-1854).—"Marriage," "The Inheritance," "Destiny."

James Morier (1780-1849).—"Adventures of Hajji Baba," "Zohrab," "Mirza."

James Fraser (1783-1856).—"The Kuzzilbash."

Theodore Hook (1788-1841).—"Sayings and Doings," "Maxwell," "Jack Brag."

John Banim (1800-1842).—"Tales of the O'Hara Family," "The Croppy."

Gerald Griffin (1803-1840).—"Tales of the Munster Festivals," "The Collegians."

William Carleton (1798-1869).—"Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," "Fardorougha the Miser."

Mary Russell Milford (1789-1855).—"Our Village," "Belford Regis."

Thomas Cive Peacock (1788-1866).—"Headlong Hall," "Maid Marian," "Crotchet Castle."

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851).—All this writer's fictions may be placed in a boy's library, though all are not of the same high merit. The best would seem to be—"The Spy," "The Pilot," "The Pioneers," "Lionel Lincoln," "Last of the Mohicans," "The Red Rover," "The Waterwitch," "Homeward Bound," "The Deerslayer," "The Two Admirals."

Captain Frederick Marryat (1792-1828).—"The King's Own," "New-ton Foster," "Peter Simple," "Jacob Faithful," "The Phantom Ship," "Midshipman Easy," "Japhet in Search of a Father," "Poor Jack," "Masterman Ready," "The Privateersman."

Captain Glasscock (d. 1847).—"The Naval Sketch Book."

Captain Howard.—"Rattlin the Reefer," "Outward Bound."

Captain Chamier.—"Ben Brace."

Michael Scott.—"Tom Cringle's Log," "Cruise of the Midge."

J. M. Hannay (1827-1873).—"Singleton Fontenoy," "Eustace Conyers."

Mrs. Gore (1799-1861).—"Mrs Armytage," "The Heir of Selwood," "Cecil the Coxcomb."

Mrs. Trollope (1778-1863).—"Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw," "Vicar of Wrexhill," "Hargrave," "The Lauringtons."

Mrs. S. C. Hall (1802).—"The Buccaneers," "Uncle Horace," "Maid Marian," "The Whiteboy."

George Payne Rainsford James (1801-1860).—"Richelieu," "Darnley," "Delorme," "Philip Augustus," "Henry of Burgundy," "John Marston Hall," "The Gipsy," "The Huguenot," "The Robber," "Sir Theodore Broughton."

Edward Lord Lytton (1805-1873).—"The Disowned," "Rienzi," "Last Days of Pompeii," "Harold," "Last of the Barons," "Zanoni," "The Caxtons," "My Novel," "What will he do with it?" "Kenelm Chillingly," "The Parisians."

William Harrison Ainsworth (1805).—"Rookwood," "Crichton," "The Tower of London," "Old St. Paul's."

Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (1804).—"The Young Duke," "Vivian Grey," "Henrietta Temple," "Venetia," "Coningsby," "Sybil," "Tancred," "Lothair."

Samuel Warren (1807-1877).—"Ten Thousand a Year," "Now and Then," "Diary of a Late Physician."

Mrs. Bray.—"The White Hoods," "Warleigh," "Fitz of Fitzford," "Trelawney of Trelawney."

Charles Dickens (1812-1870).—All Dickens's novels may be included in the boy's library of fiction.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863).—"Vanity Fair," "The Newcomes," "Pendennis," "The Virginians," "Henry Esmond," "The Kickleburys on the Rhine," "Mrs. Perkins's Ball," "Dr. Birch and his Young Friends."

Charles Kingsley (1819-1875).—"Alton Locke," "Yeast," "Westward Ho!" "Two Years Ago," "The Water-Babies," "Hereward."

Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855).—"Jane Eyre," "Shirley," "Villette."

Emily Brontë (1818-1848).—"Wuthering Heights."

Charles James Lever (1806-1872).—"Harry Lorrequer," "Charles Malley," "Jack Hinton," "Tom Burke," "The Daltons," "Luttrell of Arran," "That Boy of Norcott's," "The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly."

Samuel Lover (1798-1868).—"Handy Andy," "Rory O'More."

Thomas Hughes (1823).—"Tom Brown's School-Days," "Tom Brown at Oxford," "Scouring of the White Horse."

Mrs. Crowe.—"The Story of Lily Dawson."

Mrs. Marsh (1799-1874).—"Time the Avenger," "Emilia Wyndham," "Father Darcy," "Norman's Bridge."

Miss Julia Kavanagh (1824-1878).—"Daisy Queen," "Rachel Gray," "Nathalia Sylvia."

Mrs. Gaskell (1811-1865).—"Mary Barton," "Cranford," "North and South," "Sylvia's Lovers."

W. Wilkie Collins (1824).—"Antonina," "Basil," "The Dead Secret," "The Woman in White."

Capt. Mayne Reid (1818).—"The Rifle Rangers," "The Scalp Hunters," "The Young Voyageurs."

Miss C. M. Yonge (1820).—"The Heir of Redclyffe," "Langley School," "Heart's Ease," "The Daisy Chain," "The Trial," "Dynevor Terrace," "The Lances of Lynwood," "The Prince and the Page."

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864).—"The House with Seven Gables," "The Blithedale Romance."

Mrs. Stowe.—"Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Dred," "The Minister's Wooing," "The Pearl of Orr's Island."

Mrs. Lynn Linton.—"Azeth," "Amymone," "Lizzie Lorton," "Patricia Kemball."

Mrs. Henry Wood.—"East Lynne."

Miss Manning.—"Household of Sir Thomas More," "Edward Osborne," "Provocations of Madame Palissy."

Charles Reade (1814).—"Peg Woffington," "Christie Johnstone," "It is Never Too Late to Mend," "White Lies," "Cloister and the Hearth," "Hard Cash," "Foul Play."

W. H. Maxwell (1795-1861).—"Stories of Waterloo," "The Bivouac."

James Grant (1822).—"The Romance of War," "Adventures of an Aide-de-Camp," "Jane Seton," "The Yellow Frigate," &c.

Rev. George Gleig (1796).—"The Subaltern," "The Chelsea Pensioner," "The Hussar," "The Light Dragoon."

George Macdonald (1824).—"David Elginbrod," "Adela Cathcart," "Alec Forbes," "Wilfrid Cumbermede," "St. Michael and the Dragon," "Malcolm," "The Marquis of Lossie," "Sir Gibbie."

Edmund Yates (1831).—"Kissing the Rod," "Land at Last," "Wrecked in Port."

Miss Braddon (1837).—"Only a Clod," "John Marchmont's Legacy," "Sir Jasper's Tenant," "Ralph the Bailiff."

George Eliot (Miss Evans).—"Scenes of Clerical Life," "Silas Marner," "Adam Bede," "Mill on the Floss," "Romola," "Felix Holt," "Middlemarch."

Mrs. Oliphant (1818).—"Margaret Maitland," "Merkland," "Adam Graeme of Mossgrey," "Harry Muir," "Magdalene Hepburn," "Zaidee," "The Brownlows," "Chronicles of Carlingford," "Three Brothers," "Squire Arden," "At His Gates," "Valentine and his Brother," "White Ladies," &c.

Mrs. Craik (1826).—"The Ogilvies," "Olive," "Head of the Family," "John Halifax," "A Noble Wife," "A Life for a Life," "Christian's Mistake."

Anthony Trollope (1815).—"The Warden," "Barchester Towers," "Dr. Thorne," "Framley Parsonage," "Castle Richmond," "Orley Farm," "Small House at Allington," "Last Chronicles of Barset," "Ralph the Heir," "He Knew He was Right."

Thomas Adolphus Trollope.—"Marietta," "Lindisfarne Chase," "The Garstangs of Garstang Grange."

Mrs. Burnett.—"Lizzie," "Haworth's."

Thomas Hardy (1840).—"Under the Greenwood Tree," "A Pair of Blue Eyes," "Far from the Madding Crowd," "The Hand of Ethelberta," "Return of the Native."

Richard D. Blackmore (1825).—"Lorna Doone," "Cradock Nowell," "The Maid of Sker," "Alice Lorraine," "Cripps the Carrier," "Mary Atherley."

Bret Harte.—"Luck of Roaring Camp," "Gabriel Conroy."

William Black (1841).—"A Daughter of Heth," "Bonny Kilmeny," "Princess of Thule," "The Three Feathers."

Anne Isabella Thackeray.—"The Story of Elizabeth," "The Village on the Cliff," "Old Kensington," "Miss Angel," "Five Old Friends with a New Face."

Mrs. Macquoid.—"Hester Kirton," "The Evil Eye," "Patty."

Sarah Tytler.—"Citoyenne Jacqueline," "Lady Bell."

Lawrence W. M. Lockhart.—"Fair to See," "Doubles or Quits."

John Saunders.—"Guy Waterman," "One Against the World," "Israel Mort, Overman."

James Payn.—"Lost Sir Massingberd," "By Proxy," "Fallen Fortunes," "Under One Roof."

R. Francillon (1841).—"Olympia," "Pearl and Emerald," "A Dog and his Shadow."

Justin M'Carthy (1830).—"Miss Misanthrope," "Dear Lady Disdain."

Edward Jenkins.—"Ginx's Baby," "The Devil's Chain," "Lord Bantam."

Harriet Martineau (1801-1876).—"Deerbrook," "The Hour and the Man," "Feats on the Fiord," "The Peasant and the Prince," "The Crofton Boys," "The Settlers at Home."

Thomas Miller (1808-1874).—"Royston Gower," "Lady Jane Grey."

Eliot Warburton (1810-1852).—"Darien," "Reginald Hastings."

A boy's reading, however, must not be limited to the great departments of literature which we have thus rapidly surveyed. Natural history will claim his attention, and he will find the wonders of animal life set forth with graphic eloquence by such writers as Audubon, Alexander Wilson, Charles Waterton, Agassiz, Henry Bates, Alfred Wallace, and Charles Kingsley. A good collection of natural history anecdotes will be found in "The Parlour Menagerie." If he desire to obtain a general knowledge of geology, he should first study some such book as Lyell's "Student's Manual of Geology," and afterwards turn to Sir Charles Lyell's more elaborate "Principles," and the works of Sir Roderick Murchison, Dr. Whewel, Professors Forbes, Sewick, and Owen, Professor Ansted, and Hugh Miller—the last-named a singularly vivid and attractive writer. Mrs. Somerville's "Physical Geography" surpasses "a story-book" in absorbing interest. Astronomical science is illustrated by Sir John Herschel, J. R. Hind, Professor Nichol (an eloquent writer), Norman Lockyer, and R. W. Procter. Sir David Brewster's "More Worlds

Than One" is replete with ingenious speculation. In a different direction, the reader will find amusement and instruction in Dr. George Wilson's "Five Gateways of Knowledge," and in yet another, Professor Faraday's "Chemical History of a Candle." An apparently dry and abstruse subject has been handled with great success by Dr. W. B. Carpenter in his "Principles of Human Physiology;" and whoever would wish to escape the reproach of ignorance of the most important scientific questions will master Darwin's "Origin of Species," Professor Huxley's "Phenomena of Organic Nature," the Duke of Argyll's "Reign of Law," and Professor Tyndall's "Natural Philosophy in Easy Lessons." Within the range of an average boy's intelligence are Stewart's "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," Archbishop Whateley's and John Stuart Mill's "Logic."

The field of miscellaneous literature, or, as our forefathers loved to call it, *belles lettres*, is so wide that we fear to enter upon it. Within our narrow limits it is impossible for us to indicate a tithe of the able writers who have cultivated it. But it is certain that a boy of good ability, and professedly well educated, should be able, at the age of sixteen or seventeen, to give an account of the principal works of some of the following writers:—Ruskin (such as "Modern Painters" and "The Stones of Venice"), Sir Arthur Helps ("Friends in Council" and "Companions of my Solitude"), Buckle ("History of Civilisation"), W. R. Lecky ("History of European Morals"), John Foster (Essays on "Decision of Character" and "Popular Ignorance"), Isaac Taylor ("Natural History of Enthusiasm" and "Home Education"), the Brothers Hare ("Guesses at Truth"), Matthew Arnold ("Critical Essays" and "Culture and Anarchy"), Archbishop Trench ("Use and Abuse of Words," "English, Past and Present," and "Lessons in Proverbs"), Dean Stanley ("Lectures on the Jewish Church"), Professor Maurice ("Learning and Working"), Mrs. Jameson ("Characteristics of Shakespeare's Women" and "Legends of the Madonna"), Thomas De Quincey, William Howitt, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Leslie Stephen ("Hours in a Library"), R. H. Hutton ("Essays, Theological and Literary"), and Thomas Carlyle ("Sartor Resartus," "Past and Present," and "Lectures on Heroes").

But let us go a little further back and consider whether, before we reach manhood, we may not, by a proper utilisation of time and a wise application of our faculties, attain to a general acquaintance with the writings of sturdy William Cobbett ("Rural Rides"), Gilbert White ("Natural History of Selborne"), Robert Southey ("The Doctor"), William Hazlitt ("Lectures on Shakespeare," "The Comic Poets," "English Poetry," "The Plain Dealer," and "Table-Talk"), Washington Irving ("The Sketch Book"), Charles Lamb ("Essays by Elia"), Sydney Smith and Lord Jeffrey, Isaac Disraeli ("Curiosities of Literature," "Amenities of Literature," and "The Literary Character"), and Leigh Hunt ("The Indicator," "Men, Women, and Books," and "A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla").

Still further back we come to Horace Walpole, whose "Correspondence" and "Memoirs" are rich in anecdotal illustration of the social life of England in the reign of George II.; Dr. Adam Smith and his "Wealth of Nations;" Edmund Burke and his splendid political essays; Dr. Johnson and his "Rasselas" and "Rambler;" the Earl of Chesterfield with his celebrated "Letters to his Son;" Oliver Goldsmith and his "Citizen of the World;" Addison and Sir Richard Steele, two of our finest humorists, with their "Tatlers" and "Spectators" (to Addison we owe the creation of Sir Roger de Coverley); Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and her charming "Letters;" Lord Bolingbroke, Pope, De Mandeville, and Dean Swift.

Nor must we forget such works as Sir George Mackenzie's "Essays," or Sir William Temple's, replete as they are with shrewd reflections happily expressed; Dryden's admirable essays and critical prefaces; Izaak Walton's "Complete Angler," with its bright rural pictures and pastoral poetry, and his four fine biographies of Wotton, Hooker, George Herbert, and Sanderson; Bishop Jeremy Taylor's rich prose poetry in his "Sermons" and his "Holy Living and Dying;" Abraham Cowley's "Essays;" Owen Feltham's "Resolves;" John Earle's "Microcosmography;" Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici," "Vulgar Errors," and "Hydriotaphia" (or Urn Burial); James Howell's "Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ;" Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding" and "Thoughts Concerning Education;" John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Holy

War ;" the sermons of Tillotson, Barrow, and South ; Thomas Fuller's "Worthies of England" and his "Holy" and "Profane States," in which wit and wisdom take the quaintest possible form ; Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants ;" John Aubrey's "Miscellanies ;" Bishop Burnet's "History of His Own Time ;" Milton's "Areopagitica" and "Tractate of Education," of which Macaulay says that "they abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance ;" John Selden's "Table-Talk ;" Lord Bacon's "Essays ;" Richard Hooker's "Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity ;" and Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia."

It is not supposed that our boys will master *all* the works which are here enumerated, and there are masterpieces among them which *no* boys could thoroughly understand; but as the field is large and rich, different labourers may cultivate different portions. "Some books," says Thomas Fuller, "are only cursorily to be tasted of ; namely, first, voluminous books, the task of a man's life to read them over ; secondly, auxiliary books, only to be repaired to on occasions ; thirdly, such as are mere pieces of formality, so that if you look on them you look through them, and he that peeps through the casement of the index sees as much as if he were in the house. But the laziness of those cannot be excused who perfunctorily pass over authors of consequence, and only trade in their tables and contents." It is to the "authors of consequence" that I desire to direct the attention of my readers. My object is to accustom them at the outset to drink from the purest sources of English literature. Refreshed and invigorated by the wholesome draught, they will daily be able to do more, to think more deeply, to study more systematically, to read more rapidly and regularly, and with larger results.

A few words, in conclusion, on the *way to read*.

First, you must read with method. Choose your subject, and then arrange your reading so that all shall converge towards, and help to explain and illustrate it. Do not start off at a tangent from history to natural science, or natural science to moral philosophy. Keep in the *main road*, and if you make occasional digressions, let their object be to show what kind of country that road traverses, and in what direction it aims. Set apart a certain hour of the day for this occupation, and allow no excuse to satisfy your conscience for

trespassing upon it. You will be surprised to find how much may be accomplished in a year, even if you devote only sixty minutes a day to the work.

Read with pen or pencil in hand and jot down any particular thought or phrase that strikes you. Pause occasionally, and reflect upon the nature of the ground you have passed over; sum up the facts and arguments presented, and arrange them in your mind as exactly as possible after the mode of your author.

Don't read too much at a time. Overload the memory and it will break down. It is a willing horse, but a careless rider may easily overtax its strength. It is not the quantity you read but what you digest that will enrich and corroborate your intellect.

Read thoroughly what you undertake. Go over every chapter a second time, if you feel that you have not taken all its meaning and matter into your mind. Make brief abstracts of your author's finest and most difficult passages: and when you have finished your book, put it aside, and, a day or two afterwards, endeavour to draw up a synopsis of it.

The first step, as the witty Frenchwoman said, is all the difficulty: if you begin a book properly, you will finish it satisfactorily. On this point I shall quote some judicious remarks by Todd:—

“Always look into your dish and taste it before you begin to eat. As you sit down examine the title-page; see who wrote the book, where he lives; do you know anything of the author? . . . Recollect what you have heard about this book. Then read the preface to see what kind of a bow the author makes. Turn to the contents; see what are the great divisions of his subject, and then get a glance of his general plan. Then take a single chapter or section, and see how he has divided and filled that up. If now you wish to *taste* of the dish, turn to the place where some important point is discussed, and where some valuable thought professes to be expanded or illustrated, and see how it is executed. If, after some few such trials, you should find your author obscure, dull, pedantic, or shallow, you need not fish longer in these waters. It will be hard to catch fish here, and, when caught, they will be too small for use. But if you find the author valuable and worth *your attention*, then go back to the contents.” The preceding

advice is applicable chiefly to new books, or books whose position in literature is still dubious. What follows applies to all books:—"Examine them chapter by chapter; close the book, and see if you have the plan of the whole work distinctly and fully in your mind. Do not proceed till this *is* done. After you have this map all distinctly drawn in the mind, get the first chapter vividly before you, so far as the contents will enable you to do it. *Then proceed to read.*"







CHAPTER IX.

BOYHOOD OF FAMOUS MEN.

“ Whene’er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene’er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise.

“ Honour to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low.”

—LONGFELLOW.

eginning at the beginning—As the boy so the man—Wolcot and the boy
Opie—Napoleon’s boyhood—Illustrations from the boyhood of great
men—Newton, Pascal, Joinville, Sir Philip Sidney, and others—Great
achievements of young men—Disraeli quoted—The men who succeed
are the boys who have striven—Difficulties which have least sway in
their early years—Story of Thomas Simpson—Lord Macaulay’s boy-
hood and its lessons—A schoolboy’s letter—Franklin’s boyhood—
Faraday’s boyhood—Hugh Miller and his early experiences—His
faculty of observation—Self-education—An English gentleman—Boy-
hood of George Hughes—“Putting down” a bully—A gymnastic
feat—A Rugby boy’s letter—A father’s letter to his son—Boyhood of
Frederick Perthes—A lesson of progress—James Montgomery quoted
—Urgent necessity of our turning our boyhood to good account—Boy-
hood of Sir Thomas Lawrence—Story of Ferguson, the astronomer—
Boyhood of the poet Cowper—Alexander Murray—Self-taught—
Learning languages—Sir Walter Scott in his boyhood—His love of
reading—A good example—Robert Blake’s boyhood—Mozart, the
young musician—His wonderful precocity—Boyhood of Tytler, the
historian—His favourite books—Story of Lieutenant Smith—The
shipwreck—The young commander—A lesson of heroism—Teaching
by example—The lessons of experience—Look before you leap—

Story of the Eastern dervise—Thomas Whitehead's boyhood—Early piety—Charles Kingsley's boyhood—His earliest verses—His achievements—Robbing the hawk's nest—Bewick's boyhood—Thorwaldsen's boyhood—An anecdote and an illustration—F. W. Faber, the Church poet—Influence of scenery on his imagination—Michael Angelo's boyhood—An anecdote—The "Sleeping Cupid"—A hard worker—Sir Christopher Wren's boyhood—Young Jervis—"He would be a sailor"—Adam Smith's boyhood—Sir Isaac Newton as a boy—His mechanical tastes—Gibbon's boyhood—His love of historical reading—Reading and studying—The Latin classics—Dr. Arnold's boyhood—His recreations—His juvenile books—His character—Abraham Lincoln's boyhood—His perseverance—Concluding remarks.

IT is said of Addison, the prince of English essayists, that he employed his first years in the study of the old Greek and Roman writers, whose language and manner he caught at that time of life as strongly as other young people gain a French accent or a genteel air. Boyhood is the season for study; while the memory is fresh and strong, it retains with ease whatever we commit to its charge. The records of the lives of the good and great always "begin at the beginning;" that is, we find in their diligent and persevering youth the fit prelude to their successful manhood. All rules are liable to exceptions, but that the boy is father to the man is a rule of almost universal application. As we sow, so we reap; and if we suffer the proper sowing-time to pass by, can we expect other than a poor and unsatisfactory harvest, or indeed any harvest at all? These are truths which our moralists have thundered in the ears of successive generations of boys, too often without effect. If I repeat them now, it is, I hope, to an audience who will take them to heart and seek to put them in practice. Many boys seem to me to trust to their parents and teachers for their future in some mysterious way; *their* care is to supply every defect, remedy every negligence, even to compensate for idleness and ignorance; but the hope is vain. We make our own fate; we are what we choose to be; and all manhood must necessarily prove the reflex and sequel of our boyhood. Metastasio, the Italian poet, in his early years, sang extemporaneous verses about the streets. Opie, the painter, began to exercise his artistic tastes while still a lad. The story of Wolcot's discovery of this uneducated genius is well known, but will bear telling again :—

"Being on a visit to a relative in Cornwall, I saw either the drawing or print of a farmyard in the parlour, and, after looking at it slightly, remarked that it was a busy scene, but ill executed. This point was immediately contested by a she-cousin, who observed that it was greatly admired by many, and particularly by John Opie, a lad of great genius. Having learned the place of the artist's abode, I immediately sallied forth, and found him at the bottom of a saw-pit, cutting wood by moving the lower part of an instrument which was regulated above by another person. [In other words, he was sawing!] Having inquired, in the dialect of the country, if he could paint—"Can you *paint*?"—I was instantly answered from below in a similar accent and language that he could '*paint* Queen Charlotte and Duke William [of Cumberland] and Mrs. Somebody's cat.' A specimen was immediately shown me, which was rude, incorrect, and incomplete. But when I learned that he was such an enthusiast in his art that he got up by three o'clock of a summer's morning to draw with chalk and charcoal, I instantly conceived that he must possess all the zeal necessary for obtaining eminence. A gleam of hope then darted through my bosom, and I felt it possible to raise the price of his labour from eightpence or a shilling to a guinea a day." For this purpose Dr. Wolcot provided him with pencils, colours, and canvas, and gave him some instruction. Opie persevered, acquired dexterity of manipulation and a knowledge of colouring, removed to London, rose into great repute as a portrait-painter, and eventually became Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy. A characteristic saying of his has been handed down to us. When asked by a young man of more presumption than perseverance with what he mixed his colours, he replied shortly, "With brains, sir!" And, no doubt, these two words embody the secret of all successful work. It must be done "with brains"—with all the energy, resolution, and courage that we can bring to bear upon it.

Napoleon, when a schoolboy at Brienne, throwing up fortifications of frozen snow, and marshalling his comrades into two armies of attack and defence, is, as everybody sees, the prototype (so to speak) of Napoleon the great conqueror, the hero of Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland. So, too, we perceive in the boyhood of Linné, the great botanist, the appropriate introduction to his useful manhood. While at school he was

always collecting wildflowers, and studying with eager attention their wonderful structure. The world would have lost some of its greatest discoveries if the men who made them had been idle in their boyhood. Pascal, one of the most illustrious of the scholars of France, died at thirty-nine; and so did Torricelli, the inventor of the barometer. Sir Philip Sidney, the hero of Zutphen, and author of the beautiful prose poem of the "Arcadia," was mortally wounded and perished in his thirty-second year. Mozart died at thirty-five. Keats, when he died, had not completed his twenty-seventh year. Raffaele, the Mozart of painters, died at thirty-seven. Giovanni Pico, than whom Italy has produced few more accomplished scholars, did not live to see his thirty-third birthday. Happy for these men, and for us, the inheritors of their labours, that they made good use of their brief span of life, and worked while it was yet day.

In a well-known passage, the brilliant author of "Coningsby" asserts that the history of heroes is the history of youth. "The greatest captains of ancient and modern times," he says, "both conquered Italy at five-and-twenty. Youth, extreme youth, overthrew the Persian Empire. Don John of Austria won Lepanto at twenty-five—the greatest battle of modern times; had it not been for the jealousy of Philip, the next year he would have been emperor of Mauritania. Gaston de Foix was only twenty-two when he stood a victor on the plain of Ravenna. Every one remembers Condé and Rocroy at the same age. Gustavus Adolphus died at thirty-eight. Look at his captains: that wonderful Duke of Weimar, only thirty-six when he died; Banier himself, after all his miracles, died at forty-five; and Cortes was little more than thirty when he gazed upon the golden cupolas of Mexico. When Maurice of Saxony died at thirty-two, all Europe acknowledged the loss of the greatest captain and the profoundest statesman of the age. . . . Take the most illustrious achievements of civil prudence. Innocent III., the greatest of the Popes, was the despot of Christendom at thirty-seven. John de Medici was a cardinal at fifteen, and, Guicciardini tells us, baffled with his statecraft Ferdinand of Aragon himself; he was Pope as Leo X. at thirty-seven. Luther robbed even him of his richest province at thirty-five. Take Ignatius Loyola and John Wesley; they worked with young brains. Ignatius was only

thirty when he made his pilgrimage and wrote the 'Spiritual Exercises.' . . . Richelieu was secretary of state at thirty-one. And then there were Bolingbroke and Pitt, both ministers before other men leave cricket. Grotius was in great practice at seventeen, and attorney-general at twenty-four."

I do not wish to push the argument too far. It would be a strange world if governed by youth only. We need the ripe wisdom that comes of experience, the gravity and discretion that come with years. But youth has, at all events, the advantage of elasticity of nerve and strength of muscle, the spirit to attempt as well as the energy to accomplish great enterprises. What we have to do is to utilise those advantages, and the instances I have quoted show to how splendid an extent that utilisation may be carried. They show, too, that the men who succeed are the boys who have striven, the boys who have been patient under trial and persevering in the face of difficulty. Turn for a moment to the life of Simpson, the mathematician. His father, a working weaver, took him away from school to work at his own trade almost before the boy had learned to read. But he had acquired a fervent love of books, and formed an earnest resolve to become a scholar. You boys, who have every facility within your reach, able and assiduous teachers, first-rate books, leisure, and every domestic comfort, can hardly understand the lot of the poor man's son, who has neither books nor masters, nor the means of procuring them, and whose hours of study must be robbed from those that ought to be given to recreation or to sleep. Young Thomas Simpson, with incredible labour, taught himself to write. He read all the books that came within his reach, all that he could buy or borrow. His father, who churlishly thought that what had been good enough for him ought to be good enough for his son, was indignant at the lad's industry, and at last forbade him even to open a book, and ordered him to confine himself to his loom the whole day. Naturally the boy endeavoured to evade so severe and unjust a restriction. The result was frequent quarrels with his father, and a final outbreak, in which he was ordered to quit the house, and seek his living where and how he could. He took refuge at this crisis in the house of a tailor's widow who let lodgings in a neighbouring village, and there became acquainted with

a pedlar, who was also an astrologer and a fortune-teller, and possessed of more knowledge as well as more craft than the country bumpkins. Some time before, young Simpson's curiosity had been greatly excited by a remarkable eclipse of the sun, and this incident seems to have given his mind a bias towards mathematical studies. He found among the treasures of his friend the astrologer a treatise on algebra, Cocker's "Arithmetic," and some other books of a similar character, and these he immediately read with great avidity. Returning to his original trade as a weaver, he worked at the loom all day, and in the evening added to his income by keeping a night-school. Thus he proceeded until, in his twenty-fifth year, he launched himself into the wide world of London as a teacher of mathematics, and in his twenty-seventh laid the foundation of his fame and prosperity by the publication of his treatise on Fluxions. I leave this narrative to tell its own moral. There are some facts with lessons so obvious that he who runs may read.

I have already given some particulars of Macaulay's boyhood. In illustration of my present topic I shall bring forward a few additional traits. From the time that he was three years old he read immensely, for the most part lying on the rug before the fire, his book on the ground, a piece of bread and butter in his hand. One of the maid-servants would afterwards describe how he used to sit, in his nankeen frock, perched on the table where she was cleaning the plate, and expounding to her out of a volume as big as himself. For toys he cared nothing, but he was very fond of a walk, when he would hold forth to his companion, whether nurse or mother, telling interminable stories out of his own head, or repeating what he had been reading in language far above his years. Mrs. Hannah More was fond of relating how she called at Mr. Macaulay's, and was met by a fair, pretty, slight child, with abundance of light hair, about four years of age, who came to the front door to receive her and tell her that his parents were out, but that if she would be good enough to come in he would bring her a glass of old spirits—a proposition which greatly startled the good lady, who had never aspired beyond cowslip wine. When questioned as to what he knew about old spirits, he could only say that Robinson Crusoe *often had some*. About this period his father took him on a

visit to Lady Waldegrave at Strawberry Hill, and was much pleased to exhibit to his old friend the fair bright boy, dressed in a green coat with red collar and cuff, a frill at the throat, and white trousers. After some time had been spent among the wonders of the Oxford Collection, of which he ever after carried a catalogue in his head, a servant who was waiting upon the company in the great gallery spilt some hot coffee over his legs. The hostess was all kindness and compassion, and when, after a while, she asked how he was feeling, the little fellow looked up in her face and replied, "Thank you, madam; the agony is abated."

When he went to school, his mother explained to him that thenceforth he must learn to study without the consolation of bread and butter, to which he answered, "Yes, mamma; industry shall be my bread and attention my butter." And these, both at school and at home, *were* his bread and butter throughout a diligent and brilliant boyhood. In every branch of education he made a remarkable progress, because his heart was in his work. Some extraordinary illustrations of his intellectual activity have been recorded. "He told me one day," writes his mother, "that he had been writing a paper which Henry Daly was to translate into Malabar, to persuade the people of Travancore to embrace the Christian religion. On reading it, I found it to contain a very clear idea of the leading facts and doctrines of that religion, with some strong arguments for its adoption." From his heroic poem of "Olaus the Great, or the Conquest of Mona," the work of a boy of eight, his biographer quotes a few lines:—

"Day set on Cambria's hill supreme,
And, Monai, on thy silver stream;
The star of day had reached the west,
Now in the main it sunk to rest;
Shone great Eleindyn's castle tall,
Shone every battery, every hall,
Shone all fair Mona's verdant plain,
But chiefly shone the foaming main."

Here is another specimen:—

"'Long,' said the Prince, 'shall Olave's name
Live in the high records of fame.
Fair Mona now shall trembling stand,
That ne'er before feared mortal hand—"

Mona, that isle where Ceres' flower
 In plenteous autumn's golden hour
 Hides all the fields from man's survey
 As locusts hid old Egypt's day.' "

At the age of twelve Macaulay was sent to a private boarding-school, where he relaxed none of his studious and persevering habits. He read widely, rapidly, unceasingly; but as he read he reflected, and he stored up facts and illustrations for future use. Some boys' brains are like sieves, which hold nothing that you put into them, wine or water. Macaulay's was like a sponge, that absorbed everything, and could be made to give up its supplies at need on the slightest pressure. In one respect we do not put forward Macaulay as an example—he could not or would not play any kind of game; but though this abstention had no serious effect on Macaulay's robust intellect, in the majority of cases it would undoubtedly be injurious. It is possible, however, to copy his industry, his application, without pushing it quite so far. My readers may argue that they do not possess his abilities or his astonishing memory. Probably not; but this is a reason why they should, if possible, surpass him in *dogged work*, in resolution and patience.

A specimen of one of Macaulay's schoolboy letters, written at the age of thirteen, will appropriately conclude these reminiscences of his boyhood:—"My dear Papa," he says, "as this is a whole holiday, I cannot find a better time for answering your letter. With respect to my health, I am very well, and tolerably cheerful, as Blundell, the best and most clever of all the scholars, is very kind, and talks to me, and takes my part. The other boys, especially Lyon, a Scotch boy, and Wilberforce, are very good-natured, and we might have gone on very well had not one ——, a Bristol fellow, come here. He is unanimously allowed to be a queer fellow, and is generally characterised as a foolish boy, and by most of us as an ill-natured one. In my learning I do Xenophon every day, and twice a week the Odyssey, in which I am classed with Wilberforce, whom all the boys allow to be very clever, very droll, and very impudent. We do Latin verses twice a week, and I have not yet been laughed at, as Wilberforce is the only one who hears them, being in my class. We are exercised also **once** a week in English composition, and once in Latin com-

position, and letters of persons renowned in history to each other. We get by heart Greek grammar or Virgil every evening. As for sermon-writing, I have hitherto got off with credit, and I hope I shall keep up my reputation. We have had the first meeting of our debating society the other day, when a vote of censure was moved for upon Wilberforce; but he, getting up, said, 'Mr. President, I beg to second the motion.' By this means he escaped. The kindness which Mr. Preston shows me is very great. He always assists me in what I cannot do, and takes me to walk out with him every now and then. My room is a delightful snug little chamber, which nobody can enter, as there is a trick about opening the door. I sit like a king, with my writing-desk before me; for (would you believe it?) there is a writing-desk in my chest of drawers; my books on one side, my box of papers on the other, with my arm-chair and my candle; for every boy has a candlestick, snuffers, and extinguisher of his own."

In another letter he gives an account of his Sunday's occupations:—"It is quite a day of rest here," he writes, "and I really look to it with pleasure through the whole of the week. After breakfast we learn a chapter in the Greek Testament, that is, with the aid of our Bibles, and without doing it with a dictionary like other lessons. We then go to church. We dine almost as soon as we come back, and we are left to ourselves till afternoon church. During this time I employ myself in reading, and Mr. Preston lends me any books for which I ask him, so that I am nearly as well off in this respect as at home, except for one thing, which, though I believe it is useful, is not very pleasant. I can only ask for one book at a time, and cannot touch another till I have read it through." [An excellent regulation! It acts as a safeguard against desultory, irregular, and superficial reading.] "We then go to church, and after we come back I read as before till tea-time. After tea we write out the sermon. I cannot help thinking that Mr. Preston uses all imaginable means to make us forget it, for he gives us a glass of wine each on Sunday, and on Sunday only, the very day when we want to have all our faculties awake; and some do literally go to sleep during the sermon, and look rather silly when they wake. I, however, have not fallen into this disaster."

The happy results which flow from a well-spent boyhood

may be traced in the career of Benjamin Franklin, the shrewd American politician and sagacious "scientist." He was the son of a poor man, who, like so many poor men, had a very numerous family; and hence all the schooling he received was a year at the Boston Grammar-School, and a year under a teacher of writing and arithmetic. At the age of ten, his father took him from school to assist him in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler; and he had to cut wicks and fill moulds, serve customers, and run errands. The occupation was so distasteful to him that, afraid he would run off to sea, his father thought it advisable to select another business, and, after some vacillation, placed him with his brother, who had started as a printer. When he entered on his apprenticeship, he was twelve years old. Already he had displayed a passion for reading. All the money that he could get hold of he expended upon books. His father's library consisted chiefly of dull and dry treatises of controversial divinity, but Franklin indefatigably plodded through all of them. With greater zest he read Plutarch's "Lives" and Dyer's "Essay on Projects." From reading he naturally passed on to composition. First he tried poetry, but speedily convinced that he was not born a poet, he applied himself to prose, and, detecting his faults of expression and inelegancies of style, spared no pains to arrive at something better. While toiling in this direction he met with a volume of the "Spectator," and recognised at once the ease and elegance with which Steele and Addison wrote. He resolved, if possible, to imitate so fine a model. For this purpose he selected some of the papers, and, noting brief hints of the sentiments expressed, laid them by for a few days. Then, without looking at the originals, he endeavoured to rewrite the papers, by expressing these hinted sentiments at length, and as fully as they had been expressed before, in such suitable language as occurred to him. His next task was to compare his work with the originals, observe his errors, and correct them. "I found," he says, "I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses, since the continued search for words of the same import, but of different length to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for

variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind and make me master of it. Therefore, I took some of the tales in the 'Spectator,' and turned them into verse; and after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collection of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavoured to reduce them into the best order before I began to form the full sentences and complete the subject. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of the thoughts. By comparing my work with the original, I discovered many faults and corrected them; but I sometimes had the pleasure to fancy that in certain particulars of small consequence I had been fortunate enough to improve the method or the language; and this encouraged me to think that I might, in time, come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious."

The boy who worked with such thoughtfulness, such determination, and such singleness of aim could not fail to develop into a man above the average of men. We know that Franklin lived to play a considerable part in the struggle between England and her North American colonies, which ended in the independence of the latter, and that also in the paths of science he attained distinction. A similar amount of success, though in different ways, will always attend a similar exhibition of resolute perseverance. Not that we should hold up Franklin as a character to be imitated universally. There was a want of imaginativeness about him, of delicacy of feeling and exaltation of thought, which prevented him from rising to the rank of really great men. He was never anything more or higher than a shrewd and capable man of business, with great practical talent and a cool judgment. But we cannot do wrong if we learn by the *best qualities* of our fellows, and Franklin's tenacious perseverance was almost marvellous. For instance, at the age of sixteen he fell in with a book advocating vegetarianism, and was much impressed by one of the arguments adduced in its favour, namely, its cheapness. He decided that he would adopt it for the future, and proposed to his brother, if he would give him weekly one-half of the average cost of his board, to board himself. The offer was accepted, and Franklin soon found that by adhering to his vegetable diet he could still save half of the allowance he received from his brother. This provided him with an additional fund for

the purchase of books. But he gained another advantage by it. "My brother and the rest," he says, "going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and despatching presently my light repast (which was often no more than a biscuit or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastrycook's, and a glass of water), had the rest of the time till their return for study, in which I made the greater progress from the greater clearness of head and quickness of apprehension which generally attend temperance in eating and drinking." What shall we say of a boy of sixteen who could make such a resolution, unswervingly adhere to it, and turn it to such intellectual advantage?

Faraday, one of the greatest of English physicists, received only the merest rudiments of education, and when in his twelfth year was sent as an errand-boy to a London bookseller and bookbinder. Here he had to rise at five every morning, summer and winter, to deliver the daily newspapers to his master's subscribers. He was so regular in his work, so industrious and civil, that he won the good opinion of his master, who, before a twelvemonth had expired, took him as an apprentice, without premium, "in consideration of faithful services." As he read all the books given out to him for binding, he accumulated a good deal of information, and acquired a taste for scientific research. To quote his own simple narrative, in which his characteristic qualities of modesty and truthfulness are conspicuous:—

"I entered the shop of a bookseller and bookbinder at the age of thirteen, remained there eight years, and during the chief part of the time bound books. Now it was in those books, in the hours after work, that I found the beginning of my philosophy. There were two that specially helped me, the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' from which I gained my first notions of electricity, and Mrs. Marcet's 'Conversations in Chemistry,' which gave me my foundation in that science.

"Do not suppose that I was a very deep thinker, or was marked as a precocious person. I was a very lively, imaginative person, and could believe in the 'Arabian Nights' as easily as in the 'Encyclopædia;' but facts were important to me, and saved me. I could trust a fact, and always cross-questioned an assertion. So when I questioned Mrs. Marcet's book by such little experiments as I could find means to per-

form, and found it true to the facts as I could understand them, I felt that I had got hold of an anchor in chemical knowledge, and clung fast to it. Thence my deep veneration for Mrs. Marcet, first, as one who had conferred great personal good and pleasure on me, and then as one able to convey the truth and principle of those boundless fields of knowledge which concern natural things to the young, untaught, and inquiring mind."

So earnest an inquirer and eager a lover of truth would not long be content without the means of practical research, and he spent all his spare money—it was little enough!—in the purchase of materials. Most of our readers will themselves have dabbled in chemistry (though they are not Faradays!) and know what a pleasure it is to brew mimic thunder, to charge a phial with sham lightning, and to manufacture in an exhausted tube an imitation *aurora borealis*. There is a luxurious horror in contemplating the dormant dangers of a Leyden jar, and in watching the outburst of the fiery element immediately that you approach its secret home. And the fantastically humorous side of chemistry appeals strongly to the youthful taste. "To administer a sly shock to a friend or an enemy (the first is preferable on the score of fun, especially considering the air of indignant astonishment with which the outrage is received) is enough to enchant a lad with the machine, but to discharge a whole battery through the body of a dog throws him," says Faraday, "into paroxysms of delight."

A delightful book, which neither old nor young can read without interest, is Hugh Miller's "My Schools and Schoolmasters." We all of us have or have had *our* "schools and schoolmasters;" but either we are not fortunate enough to meet with the same stirring adventures, or we have not the power that Hugh Miller had of treating them picturesquely. A valuable lesson, however, is to be derived from the courage with which the future geologist always bore himself, his ardent love of nature, his intrepid perseverance, and his thirst after knowledge. The son of a brave Cromarty seaman, he lost his father when he was only a boy of five, and his widow mother was able to do little more than provide him and his sisters with a roof over their heads and a crust of bread to eat. Fortunately, his two uncles, the one a carpenter, the other a

saddler, and both shrewd, kindly men, showed an honest concern for his welfare, and took care that he should be sent to school.

His first experience as a scholar was not hopeful. The dominie believed in the wonder-working power of his ferule, but, so far as it was applied to Hugh Miller, it crushed rather than stimulated his abilities. He was beaten because he was a dunce, but he was a dunce in reality because he was beaten. At length he refused to learn the lessons prescribed by his tyrant; and when his uncles also would have resorted to the ferule, he defied them, knife in hand. Not that he was in love with ignorance or idleness. In his own way he was a hard student, but nature was the book he read from. Collecting a small company of boys who owned him as leader, he made the wildest excursions along the coast and over the hills in search of marine curiosities for the study of animal life.

Frequently, too, in summer afternoons, they resorted to the woods, where bees and dragonflies, ferns and blossoms, attracted Hugh's vigilant observation. Here we may note the difference between "seeing" and "not seeing." Hugh's companions went where he went; the bees and dragonflies, the ferns and blossoms, were for them as for him; yet it was he, and he only, who marked their wonder and beauty. I am often reminded, when among boys, of the story of "Eyes and no Eyes" in that old favourite, "Evenings at Home." Some are so keen to observe—take so deep an interest in all they see—while others pass through the world with eyes shut fast, and go from Dan to Beersheba only to declare that all is barren! Hugh Miller's after fame as a naturalist was due to the habits of close observation and inquiry which he formed in his boyhood. We may quote, as an example, his note upon the diadem spider. "It spins," he says, "so strong a thread, that in pressing my way through the furze thickets, I could hear its white silken cords crack as they yielded before me. I found it skilled, like an ancient magician, in the strange art of rendering itself invisible in the clearest light. The wild stories I had read about the bite of its congener, the *tarantula*, however, made me cultivate its acquaintance somewhat at a distance. Often, however, have I stood beside its large web when the creature occupied its

place in the centre, and, touching it with a withered grass stalk, I have seen it suddenly swing in the lines 'with its hands,' and then shake them with a motion so rapid that—like Carathis, the mother of the Caliph Vathek, who, when her hour of doom had come, 'glanced off in a rapid whirl which rendered her invisible'—the eye failed to see either web or insect for minutes together."

Apart from these excursions, Hugh Miller was fond of solitary rambles, in which he constantly extended his intimate acquaintance with Nature's various aspects. Moreover, he composed several long poems, and wrote story after story, while his eager, adventurous mind found delightful entertainment in the perusal of books of voyages and travels. He accompanied Woodes Rogers in his Pacific voyages, and his visit to Juan Fernandez Isle, where he found the solitary Alexander Selkirk. He traced the adventures of Lord Anson in his remarkable expedition, landed with him on the green island shores of Tinian, and shouted with delight at the capture of the great Spanish galleon. Or he sailed with Captain Cook in his circumnavigations, explored the palmy island-clusters of the South Seas, and mourned over the famous discoverer's death at the hands of the savages of Owhyhee.

Amidst this rough kind of self-education Hugh Miller reached his fourteenth year, and his uncles began to feel it urgent upon them to provide him with an honest occupation. They had hoped to make a minister of him, but were dissuaded by the dominie, who had not the sagacity to discover Hugh's great mental endowments beneath his mask of wilfulness. After long discussions between them and their nephew, it was settled that he should learn the trade of a mason, Hugh having observed that a mason, though hard worked during several months of the year, had the winter months to himself. He was accordingly apprenticed to a maternal uncle, named David Wright, one of those clear-headed, self-reliant, resolute characters whom Scotland seems to breed in such abundance. "The man who, standing on the thwarts of his boat, which had just sunk, the sea-water being at the moment up to his throat, could so accurately appreciate the points of the situation, and retain so clear a perception of the thing to be done, as to say, on seeing his snuff-box floating off, 'Od, Andrew, man, just rax (reach) out your hand and tak' in my snuff-box,'

must have had an enviable firmness of nerve and greatness of self-possession."

Hugh settled down to his work with wonderful energy and application. He had to suffer much. The labour was heavy and the payment small; but he never complained, never flinched. Exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, digging in quarries, building dykes, the strain upon his young frame was great; but he never asked for indulgence, and he still found time to pursue his beloved studies, to observe and compose and read. The stonemason went on his way, sober, industrious, thoughtful, and lived to give to the world the "Testimonies of the Rocks," "Footprints of the Creator," "The Old Red Sandstone," and many other works of undoubted merit.

It would be difficult to find anywhere a more attractive portrait of an English gentleman than Mr. Thomas Hughes has drawn in his "Memoir of a Brother;" and as it must be the desire and object of my readers to grow into English gentlemen, it will be worth our while to see what kind of boyhood this true English gentleman spent. His brother (the author of "Tom Brown's School-Days") says of him:—"We were as nearly of an age as brothers can be—I was only thirteen months younger—and we were companions from our childhood. We went together to our first school, when I was nearly eight and he nine years old; and then on to Rugby together; and were never separated for more than a week until he went to Oxford, where I followed a year later. For the first part of my time there in college, we lived in the same rooms, always on the same staircase, and afterwards in the same lodgings. From that time to the day of his death we lived in the most constant intimacy and affection. Looking back over all these years, *I can call to mind no single unkind, or unworthy, or untruthful act or word of his*; and amongst all the good influences for which I have to be thankful, I reckon the constant presence and example of his brave, generous, and manly life as one of the most powerful and ennobling." This is high praise. Well would it be if of each of us, when his life-work is done, as much could truly be said by those who have known us best.

That George Hughes was a boy of courageous and resolute temper is proved by various experiences. Thus, when he was ~~seven~~ *seven* and his brother six years old, their parents were away

from home for a few days. They were at play together, the two boys, in the garden, when the footman came up to them, carrying the old single-barrelled gun which the gardener used for scaring away birds, and inquired whether they would like to go rook-shooting. The offer was eagerly accepted, and they trotted along by his side to the rookery, some three hundred yards from the house. "As we came up," writes Tom Hughes, "we saw a small group of our friends under the trees—the groom, the village schoolmaster, and a farmer or two—and started forwards to greet them. Just before we got to the trees, some of them began firing up at the young rooks. I remember even now the sudden sense of startled fear which came over me. My brother ran in at once under the trees, and was soon carrying about the powder-horn from one to another of the shooters. I tried to force myself to go up, but could not manage it. Presently he ran out to me, to get me to go back with him, but in vain. I could not overcome my first impression, and kept hovering round, at a distance of thirty or forty yards, until it was time for us to go back; ashamed of myself, and wondering in my small mind why it was that he could go in amongst that horrible flashing and smoke, and the din of firing, and cawing rooks, and falling birds, and I could not."

The two boys owned a small Shetland pony called Moggy, upon which they were to complete their own education in riding, having already mastered the rudiments under the care of their grandfather's coachman. Their parents had a theory that boys must teach themselves horsemanship, and that a saddle was a hindrance rather than a help. So, when they had finished their lessons, they repaired to the paddock in which Moggy lived, and began their course of self-instruction. George was immediately at home with the new-comer. He would scramble up on her back while she continued grazing, pull her head up (she was already bridled), kick his heels into her side, and scamper away round the paddock with infinite delight. From the first he was Moggy's master, though she sometimes contrived to rid herself of him by sharp turns or by stopping dead short in her gallop. After a brief novitiate he was allowed to go hunting. On the first occasion he was accompanied by his father, and of what he did and saw he wrote the following account to his grandmother:—

"DEAR GRANDMAMA,—Your little dog Mustard sometimes teases the hawk by barking at him, and sometimes the hawk flies at Mustard. I have been out hunting upon our black pony, Moggy, and saw the fox break cover, and the hounds follow after him. I rode fifteen miles. Papa brought me home the fox's leg. I went up a great hill to see the hounds drive the fox out of the wood. I saw Ashdown Park House; there is a fine brass nob at the top of it. Tom and I send best love to you and grandpapa."

On the second occasion, he went without a guardian, and returned about three o'clock in the afternoon, carrying "the brush" in his hand, and his face all smeared with blood, according to the barbarous custom of those days. He had been in at the death; and a farmer who was present recounted with great gusto all the wonders which George and Moggy had performed together; how they had crept through impossible holes in great fences, scrambled across ditches, and climbed up banks, so as to be present "at the finish," where he had been singled out from the mob of horsemen, and led up to the master, the late Lord Ducie, to be "blooded" by the huntsman, and to receive the brush, the highest honour open to the boy-foxhunter.

The two boys went to school, and before they had been there a week, George showed very convincingly the fine stuff he was made of. His young brother's form had a lesson in Greek history to get up, in which a part of the information communicated was that Cadmus was the first man who "carried letters from Asia to Greece." When they came to be examined, the master asked Thomas Hughes, "What was Cadmus?" This mode of putting it puzzled all the *condiscipuli* for a moment, when suddenly Thomas, remembering the word "letters," and in connection with it the man with the leather bag who used to bring his father's letters and papers, shouted, "A postman, sir." At first the master looked very angry, but seeing that the answer had been given in perfect good faith, and that the *answerer* had sprang to his feet expecting promotion to the head of the form, he burst out laughing. Of course all the boys joined in chorus, and when school was over Thomas was christened Cadmus. To this he would have made no great objection, but the blood kindled

in his veins when the word was shortened into "Cad." The angrier he grew, the more eagerly some of the boys persecuted him with the obnoxious monosyllable ; especially one stupid lout of twelve years old or so, who ought to have been two forms higher, and revenged himself for his degradation among the ninnies, by making their small lives as miserable as he could. A day or two after, with two or three boys for audience, he shut up little Hughes in a corner of the playground, and pelted him with the sobriquet he knew to be so offensive, "Cad ! Cad !" until the boy's wrath was beyond bounds. Suddenly a step was heard tearing down the gravel walk, and George, in his shirt sleeves, freed from a game of rounders, swept into the circle, and sent the tyrant staggering back with a blow in the chest, and then, with a blaze of righteous anger in the eyes and clenched fists, bravely confronted him. As I have already pointed out, bullies are invariably cowards, and Tom Hughes's persecutor, though three years older, a stone heavier, and much stronger than his assailant, did not dare to face him. He struck off, muttering and growling, much to the disgust of the boys, who, boy-like, had hoped for "a jolly row ;" while George returned to his comrades, after comprehensively looking round and saying, "Just let me hear any of you call my brother 'Cad' again."

It is pleasant to relate that this manly, gallant-spirited fellow, an adept in all out-of-door exercises and playground games, was a capital student. He rose from form to form until he reached the highest, amongst boys two years older than himself, and in the competition for prizes was invariably successful. It is often asserted that boys cannot serve two masters, cannot excel in school and the playground or gymnasium also ; but this is a mistake, though, of course, boys who devote *all* their time and energies to the "palaestra" cannot but cut a sorry figure in their classes. George Hughes was not only one of the leaders in his form, but in all kinds of gymnastics. Every year a gymnastic examination took place, attended by the master's daughters and a lady or two from the neighbourhood, who distributed the prizes (plates of fruit and cake) at the end of the day to the victors. It happened on one occasion that the excitement rose unusually high. A new prize for vaulting had been offered ; not for the common kind of vaulting, but for vaulting between the hands—a dan-

gerous exercise, by the way. The competitor had to place both his hands on the back of the vaulting-horse, as far apart or as near together as he liked, and then spring over between them without lifting either, even for half an inch. At such a trial of skill only long-armed boys could hope to be successful, but of these the entry was large. Very soon, however, one after another fell out, either for shifting their hands or touching with their feet, until George and an active young comrade of his were left in their glory. The two continued springing over the horse, without the least touch of feet or movement of hand, until it was at last voted by acclamation that the prize should be divided between them.

When only twelve years old, George Hughes was sent to Rugby, and a letter which he soon afterwards addressed to his parents will convince the reader that his ardour as an athlete had not impaired his energy as a scholar, and that he had never neglected or misunderstood the real purpose of a schoolboy's life :—

“MY DEAR PAPA AND MAMA,—I received your letter to-day. I have got a little cough now, but it is getting better every day. Tom is quite well. I now generally keep among the four first of my form, and I find that by application you are enabled to do yourself greater credit than if you trust yourself to the assistance of books or that of other boys. There are two boys besides myself who always do our work together, and we always take three-quarters of an hour out of school, besides three-quarters which is allowed us in school, to prepare our work. The work of our form is the ‘Eumenides’ of Æschylus, Homer, Virgil, Horace, and Cicero’s Epistles. The half year is divided into two quarters, one of which is for classics mostly, and the other for history. The books for the next quarter are Arrian’s ‘Expedition of Alexander,’ and Paterculus’s ‘History of Rome,’ and Mackintosh’s ‘English History.’ For composition we do Greek iambics and Latin verse, which is generally taken from some English author, and we translate it into Latin. We also do English and Latin themes once a week. The Easter business is just over; there were three speech days, the rehearsal (or first day), the day on which the poor people are allowed to come, and the grand day. On the grand

day the day was very fine, and there was a very large assembly of people. The speeches, and prize compositions, and poems were—

“SIXTH FORM.

“Lake (now Dean of Durham).—Latin essay ; *Bellum civile Marianum*.

“Lake.—Latin verse ; *Phœnicia*.

“Clough (A. H., the poet).—English essay ; the English language.

“Clough.—English verse ; close of eighteenth century.

“Arnold (afterwards Rev. C., of Rugby).—Greek verse ; the murder of Becket.

“FIFTH FORM ESSAY.

“Jackson.—On the Sources of Pleasure.

“Curteis.—Speech of Canning at Lisbon (Liverpool?).

“Simpkin.—Conclusion of Warren Hastings’s trial.

“The speeches began at one o’clock ; they were ended at three, and about 200 went to dine at the ‘Spread Eagle.’ . . . I have not much more to say now. Give my love to cousins, uncle, grandmama, and everybody.”

But I can spare no more space for the annals of George Hughes’s boyhood. He passed a distinguished career at Rugby, and from thence removed to Oxford, where he did not belie the promise of his early years. Going forth into the world, he was honoured by all who came in contact with him as a man of the highest integrity and worth. In due time a son of his own, following in his footsteps, went to Rugby, and Mr. Hughes frequently addressed him in letters the wisest and most genial conceivable. From one of them I quote the following passage, first, because it throws a vivid light on his noble character ; second, because it helps us to see the frankness and sincerity of the advice he gives his son ; and, third, because my readers will be the better for its words of counsel :—

“The reason you give for having lost a few places is no doubt the right one—that you have not got yet into the swing—it will be all right in a week or two. I have no doubt you will get your remove at the end of term easily enough. The

exam. (if I understand rightly) consists of subjects which you prepare during term, and there is not much 'unseen.' This will be an advantage to you over the idle ones who don't prepare their work. I shall be delighted to help you in any way, if you will only let me know and give me due notice. Perhaps you won't believe me when I assure you again that Latin prose will come to you as well as cricket and football in good time, but it is the truth nevertheless. At your age I often felt the same discouragement which you feel. I had rather overgrown myself, like you, and was longer ripening (to use an expressive phrase) than many fellows who did not grow so fast; but it all came right in my case, as it will in yours. Therefore *en avant* and don't be discouraged. . . .

"We are very glad to hear that you are in upper-middle one, and it will make us very happy if you can get another remove at Christmas. It is to be done if you like, and as you cannot play football just now (worse luck) you will have more time. Don't you want some help in your tutor work? If so, send me the book; or is there anything else in which I can help you? You are now rapidly becoming a young man, and have probably some influence in the school, and will have more. Be kind to the new boys and juniors; even if they are 'scrubby,' your business is to polish them, and you will do this much better by a little kind advice than by making their lives a burden—(I don't say, mind, that you are unkind to them). Don't 'bosh' your masters. Remember that they are gentlemen like yourself, and that it is insulting them to 'bosh' them when they are taking trouble with you. As to the sixth form, I don't quite approve of all the customs thereof, but it is an institution of the school, and, on the whole, beneficial, and it is no use kicking against it. Now I have done with my preaching. . . .

"I am not going to preach to you about billiards. If there had been a table at Rugby in my time (there was none), I might very possibly have played myself; although, like you, I should certainly not have made a habit of it, preferring, as I did and do, more active amusements. Don't play again at Rugby; it would be childish as well as wrong to risk leaving school under a cloud for such a paltry gratification. I don't agree with you in comparing billiards to your school games: *billiards* (public) generally involve smoking, and a certain

amount of drinking, and losing money (or winning, which is worse), and engender a sort of lounging habit. I am afraid you have rather a fast lot at Rugby, and what you told me about card-playing makes me rather anxious about Jack. It is altogether abominably bad form, and I wish you would get up an opposition to it. It ought to be put down for the credit of the school. I must say that there was no such card-playing in my time. Having said my say, I must leave you to do what you can, in concert with any other big fellows in the house who may be brought to see the matter in my light."

There is an inspiration for boys of the right spirit—manly boys, truth-seekers, truth-lovers, who attain to some perception of the uses of their boyhood—in the story of Frederick Perthes, the German publisher, who, in his later life, was distinguished by his patriotic exertions to rouse his countrymen against the tyranny of Napoleon.

Perthes was born in 1772. His father, a doctor, died when Frederick, one of a family of seven, was barely seven years old. As a consequence, the boy fell to the charge of his maternal grandmother, but as she too died within a twelve-month, he passed into that of a maternal uncle, a man of good conduct and character, but desperately poor. In his twelfth year Frederick entered the gymnasium or public school, but having had little preliminary instruction, could not profit by its high-class teaching. He learned, however, to love books, and in his hours of want and depression found them his constant and unselfish friends. So body and soul and mind he grew, nourishing high thoughts and responding with pure heart to every gentle emotion and generous sympathy. He wished much that he could write books, it seemed to him so noble a vocation; but as he had neither the faculty nor the means, he next bethought himself that he would sell them. If he could not produce them he could assist in their distribution. So, at the age of fourteen, he set out for Leipzig to seek a situation with some bookseller. A printer had given him a letter of recommendation to a friend of his, and Perthes duly presented it. But his shyness, and perhaps his meagre, delicate appearance, prejudiced the man against him, and he dismissed him curtly.

After a year of waiting, however, he obtained an engagement, and began a laborious and painful apprenticeship.

He was at work from seven in the morning until eight in the evening, with only half-an-hour at noon for dinner. He was half starved. "What I find hardest," he wrote to his uncle, "is that I have only a halfpenny roll in the morning ; I find this to be scanty allowance. In the afternoon, from one to eight, we have not a morsel. That is what I call hunger ; and I think we ought to have something." He fell ill, and would have died but for the kindly attention of his master's daughter, Frederika. For nine long weeks he lay in his bed in a bleak little attic-chamber, but not neglected, for this lovely child of twelve years took him under her care and tended him with constant affection. All day long she sat, knitting-needles in hand, by the bedside of the invalid, talking with him, consoling him, ministering to him. Upon the floor, among other old books, was a translation of Muratori's "History of Italy," and the poor girl, with unfailing tenderness, read through several of the ponderous quartos in the dusty little attic. A devoted friendship sprang up between the children, the result of these gentle attentions, and continued long after he had need of her nursing.

On his recovery he resumed, in his scanty leisure, the work of self-improvement. He read all the best German writers with assiduity, and he attempted translations from the French and Latin, besides essaying original poetry and prose. Making the acquaintance of some young Suabians, who toiled manfully at the noble task of self-culture, their example stimulated his intellectual development. And thus he progressed from height to height, his mind enlarging as he fed it with the thoughts of the wise and good, and his moral nature acquiring a greater refinement and elevation, a profounder sense of duty, a stronger conviction that the true object of life is to prepare oneself for eternity. So, as James Montgomery sings :—

" Higher, higher, will we climb
Up the mount of glory,
That our names may live through time
In our country's story ;
Happy, when her welfare calls,
He who conquers, he who falls !

" Deeper, deeper, let us toil
In the mines of knowledge ;

Nature's wealth and learning's spoil
Win from school and college ;
Delve we there for richer gems
Than the stars of diadems.

Onward, onward, will we press
Through the path of duty ;
Virtue is true happiness,
Excellence true beauty.
Minds are of supernal birth,
Let us make a heaven of earth.

" Closer, closer, then we knit
Hearts and hands together,
Where our fireside comforts sit
In the wildest weather ;
Oh ! they wander wide who roam
For the joys of life from home.

" Nearer, dearer bonds of love
Draw our souls in union,
To our Father's house above,
To the saints' communion ;
Thither every hope ascend,
There may all our labours end."

The thoughtlessness of boys is the great obstacle to their progress. I do not want them to be premature old men ; I do not wish to deprive them of their freshness of heart and gaiety of spirit ; but I *do* want, I *do* wish them to remember that the miseries of an idle and wasted boyhood will dog their footsteps throughout their later life. There is a time for everything—a time for work and a time for play ; but the majority of boys seem to believe that the time for work can be indefinitely postponed. Now, I think I have shown that an industrious boyhood is the necessary prelude to an honourable and useful manhood. It is in boyhood that our tastes are formed, that our intellectual and moral bias is manifested ; and it is therefore in this season of preparation that we can most easily acquire right principles of conduct and give a proper direction to our energies. To divert the course of a great river is a difficult, an almost impossible task ; but if you take the small and tranquil stream near its fountain-head, you may turn it at will into any channel you desire. If we persevere in a *wrong* path until we have reached mature years,

we shall find it a painful effort to retrace our steps and get into the path of duty ; but in boyhood the "straight way" is readily found, and if we once enter upon it, we shall have only to follow it up, and the journey, as we advance, will grow ever more and more delightful. Therefore, let me ask of my boy-readers a little thought, a little careful consideration ; let me ask of them to remember that, of all the bitter regrets which can retard their manhood, none is so bitter as the regret for a misspent youth which can never come again. How often have I heard men say—or, if I have not heard them say, I know that they have thought—"Could I but go through my school life again, I would live it very differently. Now that it is *too late*, I see what I might have been, what I might have done!"

The boyhood of Sir Thomas Lawrence, the great painter, is worth a passing glance. He was a clever and engaging child, with those winning manners which seem natural to some happy children. He was early taught to recite poetry ; and when he was only four or five years old, his fond father would bring him forward when any stranger visited the house, to display his juvenile accomplishments. Injudicious conduct ! but fortunately it did not spoil young Lawrence, probably because his real talent did not lie in that direction ; for he was already skilful with his pencil, and drew portraits which were remarkable for their accuracy. He was completely self-taught, however, or rather he but developed a faculty born with him and not to be repressed. He had no opportunity of seeing a good painting until several years after he had begun to draw.

At the age of six he was sent to school, but allowed to remain only for a couple of years ; this, unfortunately, with the exception of a few lessons in Latin and French, was all the education he received. But his brilliant talents were already widely known, and one gentleman liberally offered to defray the expense of his residence in Italy for some years, that his singular natural powers might be adequately cultivated. Had the offer been accepted, Lawrence, instead of becoming only a popular portrait-painter, would have probably developed into a great artist. His father, however, had unwisely formed the notion that such genius as his son's would be weakened and starved by instruction, and he not only refused to allow him to go to Rome, but even to take lessons

from a master in his own country. The boy's sole teaching was that which he derived from the study of the masterpieces contained in the collections of some of the neighbouring gentry, who kindly threw them open to his inspection.

When he was ten years old his father removed to Oxford, where he puffed his son as a heaven-sent prodigy, a self-taught genius, and made a large sum of money by the portraits which his facile pencil rapidly produced. Thence he went to Weymouth, and from Weymouth to Bath, where the boy's extraordinary abilities attracted sitters in such numbers that he was able to raise the price of his crayon portraits from a guinea to a guinea and a half. For six years his industry supported his father and the rest of the family. In his eighteenth year he removed to London, where he obtained the means of study, and, through an acquaintance which he formed with Sir Joshua Reynolds, became aware of his artistic deficiencies. Thenceforward he endeavoured by study and reflection to improve his style and gain a thorough knowledge of the principles of his art. But it was impossible to undo all the mischief that had been done. To a great extent his early years had been wasted, and he was forced to rely on his fine natural powers, untrained and uncultivated as they were. That he attained celebrity and was largely patronised is well known, but his fame has already undergone a sensible diminution, and Sir Thomas Lawrence will never be remembered among the "great masters." This was the result of his father's obstinate ignorance and narrow selfishness, owing to which his boyhood's opportunities were perforce neglected.

There is a grand lesson to be learned—a lesson of patience and honest work and diligent striving—from the story of the boyhood of James Ferguson, the astronomer, which, I fancy, is not so well known to boys of the present, as it was to those of a past generation. His father was simply a day-labourer, but he was a man of admirable character and conduct, who himself taught his children to read and write on their reaching what he conceived to be the proper age. James, however, could not wait until his time came; while an elder brother was receiving instruction, he listened with all his ears, and when left alone would get hold of the book and endeavour to master the lesson he had heard his brother repeating. Frequently he met with difficulties; whereupon, afraid or ashamed

to let his father know what he was doing, he sought assistance from an old woman living in a neighbouring cottage, and in this way learned to read tolerably well before his father suspected that he knew his alphabet. But at last his father, much to his astonishment, surprised the child when reading by himself, and discovered his secret.

Most of us can recollect some apparently accidental circumstance which gave a direction to our thoughts and settled our future path in life, but obviously that accident could have had no such effect if it had not touched a latent but powerful chord in our nature. The mathematical or scientific bias of Ferguson's mind was brought out by a simple incident; only the incident could have exercised no influence if that bias had not already existed. The roof of the cottage having given way, his father, in order to raise it again, applied to it a beam which he worked upon a prop after the fashion of a lever, and thus succeeded in easily accomplishing what seemed to the boy Ferguson a wonderful feat. Reflecting on it, he remembered that his father, in using the beam, had brought all his strength to bear on its extremity, and this he concluded to be the key to the mystery. Like any acute and inquiring mind, he proceeded to put his theory to the test of experiment, and having made several "bars," as he called them, or levers, he soon found that he was right in his conjecture, and also ascertained the rule or mechanical principle that the effect of any force or weight applied to the lever is always in exact proportion to the distance from the fulcrum of the point on which it rests. He then thought it a great pity that, by means of the lever, a weight could be raised only a little way, and the idea occurred to him that, by pulling round a wheel, the weight might be lifted to any height if a rope were fastened to it, and the rope wound the axle of the wheel. Also that the power gained must be just as great as the wheel was broader than the axle was thick. And this he found to be the case by hanging one weight to a rope put round the wheel, and another to the rope that coiled round the axle. Thus the boy had arrived at a perception of two cardinal truths in mechanics; he had discovered the properties of the lever and the wheel and axle, and this without book or treatise, without other tools than his father's old turning-lathe and his own clasp-knife. His next task was to commit to writing an account of what he supposed

to be his discoveries, with sketches illustrating his little machines. But some time after a gentleman lent him a treatise on mechanics, and he found that his inventions had long been anticipated—a disappointment mitigated by the reflection that his unaided industry had arrived at conclusions which men of genius had wrought out with the advantage of books and proper appliances.

His father was too poor to keep him at home, and he went out, therefore, as a keeper of sheep in the employment of a small farmer. The occupation afforded him a good deal of leisure, and while his flock were browsing he made models of mills and spinning-wheels, or at night observed the motions of the stars. He would go into the fields with a blanket wrapped about him and a lighted candle in his hand; lying down on the grass, he then pursued his astronomical studies with eager enthusiasm. His method was to stretch a thread with small beads on it at arm's length between his eye and the stars, sliding the beads along it till they hid such and such stars from his eye, in order to indicate their apparent distances from one another; after which, laying the thread down on a paper, he marked the stars upon it by the position of the beads. His master generously gave him every encouragement, and frequently did the boy's work for him in order that during the daytime he might make a fair copy of what he had done in the night. His drawings coming to the notice of the "minister," that gentleman put into his hands a map of the sidereal heavens along with compasses, ruler, pen, ink, and paper, and instructed him to make a copy. This he did, and did so well, that the self-taught lad's achievement interested a neighbouring "laird," who made arrangements for his receiving instruction in decimal fractions and algebra. Afterwards he took to watchmaking, and though he had never seen a watchmaker at work, and though he was wholly without the proper tools, he constructed a timepiece moved by a spring. From watchmaking he went on to portrait-painting, in which he was so successful that patrons gathered around him, and he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had ample opportunity of pursuing the philosophical studies that most deeply interested him. His after career lies beyond our province; but we may note that an industrious and persevering boyhood was crowned by a prosperous and famous manhood.

The boyhood of Cowper, the poet, has a certain interest for us. On his mother's death, which happened in his sixth year, he was sent to a large boys' school, though, as a nervous, delicate, and sensitive child, he was by no means fitted to undergo so rough an ordeal. He had hardships, he says, of various kinds to contend with, which he felt all the more sensibly from the tenderness with which he had been treated at home. Unfortunately, the school (like most schools) had its bully, and this bully, a lad of about fifteen years of age, selected the poor shrinking and reserved child as a proper object upon whom to let loose the cruelty of his temper. And such was the barbarity of his treatment, and such the sensibility of his victim, that Cowper, in his mature years, could well remember being afraid to lift up his eyes upon him higher than his knees, and that he knew him by his shoe-buckles better than by any other part of his dress. This cruel persecution, continued for a couple of years, had a most injurious effect upon its victim. Brooding over his secret wrongs, he lost the natural gaiety of youth, and a constitutional tendency to fits of melancholy was dangerously encouraged. Even his health was seriously impaired, and physical infirmity made itself apparent in a weakness of the eyes which threatened permanent injury to his sight. This led to inquiry; he was taken from the school where he had undergone so much, was for some months under the charge of an oculist, and afterwards was sent to Westminster.

During his seven years' apprenticeship to the classics, Cowper entered heartily into the amusements of his school-fellows. His attachment to Homer and his cultivation of Latin verse did not prevent him from excelling at cricket and at football. But he prudently divided his time between study and recreation, giving, however, as he was bound to do, the larger share of it to the former. Had it been otherwise, English literature would have been the poorer by the absence of "The Task," and many other poems remarkable for their purity, simplicity, and ease.

A bad workman always complains of his tools, while a good workman will make bad tools serve his purpose, if no better are available. Boys nowadays are provided with manuals, *primers*, *handbooks*, and other helps, constructed on the most *approved* principles, and it would seem to be supposed by

many that these do away with the necessity of intellectual exertion and vigorous application. It is to be feared that their tendency is to make the road to knowledge too easy; so that, relying on its facile character, the scholar does not give the necessary attention to his journey, and passes onward through a country the character of which he has wholly failed to note. One cannot but read with admiring interest of what has been accomplished in his boyhood by many a poor scholar who had none of those guides and keys now at every schoolboy's disposal. For example, look at the experiences of Alexander Murray, the Orientalist. He received his first lessons in reading from his father, who had no other book for his use than the Scotch "Shorter Catechism," to which was prefixed a copy of the alphabet in large type. "It was considered," says Murray, "too good a book for me to handle at all times, and, therefore, was generally locked up, and my father, throughout the winter, drew the figures of the letters to me, in his *written* hand, on the board of an old *wool-card*, with the black end of an extinguished heather stem or root snatched from the fire. I soon learned all the alphabet in this form, and became *writer* as well as *reader*. I wrought with the *board* and *brand* continually. Then the catechism was presented, and in a month or two I could read the easier parts of it. I daily amused myself with copying as above the printed letters. In May 1782 [when Murray was in his seventh year], he gave me a small psalm-book, for which I totally abandoned the catechism, which I did not like, and which I tore into two pieces and concealed in a hole of a dyke. I soon got many psalms by memory, and longed for a new book. Here difficulties rose. The Bible, used every night in the family, I was not permitted to open or touch. The rest of the books were put up in chests. I at length got a New Testament, and read the historical parts with great curiosity and ardour. But I longed to read the Bible, which seemed to me a much more pleasant book; and I actually went to where I knew an old loose-leaved Bible lay, and carried it away in piecemeal. I perfectly remember the strange pleasure I felt in reading the histories of Abraham and David. I liked sorrowful narratives, and greatly admired Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Lamentations. I pored on these pieces of the Bible in secret for many months, but I durst not show

them openly ; and, as I read constantly and remembered well, I soon astonished all our honest neighbours with the large passages of Scripture I repeated before them."

When about seven or eight years of age, he was sent out to watch his father's sheep ; but he was shortsighted, and far from strong, and it was soon found that the work was too much for him. Moreover, he was of sedentary habits, and given to books, and to writing on boards with coals. His father did not know what to do with such a "feckless" genius. He was too poor to send him to school, even if the boy could have gone a journey of between five and six miles twice a day. Happily, a maternal uncle heard of his nephew's surprising talents, and undertook to bear the expense not only of sending him to school, but of providing him with board and lodging in the village where the school was situated. Accordingly, he went to school, and there, at first, he was the butt of his schoolfellows, who, with characteristic thoughtlessness, ridiculed his strange pronunciation of words, his uncouth conversation, and his home-bred manners. But by degrees his ability and his strenuous perseverance won their respect ; and I think the world of boys is always readier and more eager to acknowledge talent than the world of men and women. Before the August holidays arrived, he was often *dux* in the Bible-class, and had learned to write copies and use pen and ink with dexterity and even ease, for he worked *out* of school as well as *in* school, and was never weary of the task of self-improvement. But falling ill, he was compelled to return home ; and though he soon recovered his health, his uncle did not renew his generosity, and for five years the poor boy was left to grope after knowledge without any assistance. He was again sent out on the bare hillside to watch the flocks, and he availed himself of his many solitary hours to commit to memory any old ballad or penny history of which he could get hold. It was a joy and a revelation to him when he obtained from a friend (he was then just twelve years old) Salmon's "Geographical Grammar" and L'Estrange's translation of the Jewish historian Josephus. Boys who have at command the advantages of a large library, and an abundant supply of interesting books, *cannot* possibly enter into the feelings of a poor lad like Alexander Murray, to whom books were as far-off visions of

bliss which the mind knows can never be realised. He devoured his two acquisitions with the greatest zest, and one of them, Salmon's "Geographical Grammar," influenced materially the direction and character of the studies of his after years.

He was now in his thirteenth year, and his parents, convinced that he would never earn his bread as a shepherd, were anxious that he should seek to maintain himself in some other vocation. Accordingly, he procured an engagement as teacher in the families of two of the neighbouring farmers, receiving in return his board during the winter and the sum of sixteen shillings. Part of this magnificent honorarium he expended in the purchase of books. One of these was Cocker's "Arithmetic," from which, in two or three months, the indefatigable boy learned the four principal rules of arithmetic, and even advanced to the rule of three, with no additional assistance except the use of an old copybook of examples made by some boy at school, and a few hints from an elder brother. In the following year, his father having removed nearer the village, he was allowed to attend school for three days in the week. School to many boys, I fear, is a kind of penance; to the boy Murray, thirsting for knowledge, it was absolute happiness. He made the most of his three days; was always at school an hour before anybody else; pored over his arithmetic; and regularly opened and read all the English books, such as the "Spectator" and the "World," which his schoolfellows brought with them, devoting to this delightful employment the hours allotted to play. This time of joy, however, was brief; it lasted only six weeks. But next year he went to school for fully three months and a half, and it was then that he began to gratify the taste for learning foreign languages, first stimulated by his study of Salmon's "Geography." "I had often admired," he writes, "and mused on the specimens of the Lord's Prayer, in every language, found in Salmon's Grammar. I had read in the magazines and 'Spectator' that Homer, Virgil, Milton, Shakespeare, and Newton were the greatest of mankind. I had been early informed that Hebrew was the first language by some elders and good religious people. In 1789, an old woman who lived near me showed me her psalm-book, which was printed with a large type, had notes on each page, and likewise what I

discovered to be the Hebrew alphabet marked letter after letter in the 119th Psalm. I made a copy of these letters, by printing them off in my old way, and kept them." He took advantage of his few weeks at school to begin the study of French, applying himself to it with characteristic determination. The study of French led him on to that of Latin. In this way, a schoolfellow made him a present of a Latin grammar very popular in the days of the present writer's boyhood, Ruddiman's "Rudiments." Murray examined it for four or five days, and was struck by the fact that "the nouns (unlike those in French or English) had changes on the last syllable." One day, by accident, he took with him to school his Latin instead of his French grammar; and on his acknowledging his mistake to his master, the latter, who chanced to be in a very genial mood, exclaimed, "Gad, Sandy, I shall try thee with Latin," and he read over to him no fewer than two of the declensions.

"It was his custom," says Murray, "to permit me to get as long lessons as I pleased, and never to fetter me by joining me to a class. There was at that time in the school a class of four boys advanced as far as the pronouns in Latin grammar. They ridiculed my separated condition. But before the vacation I had reached the end of the rudiments, knew a good deal more than they by reading at home the notes on the foot of each page, and was so greatly improved in French that I could read almost any French book at opening of it. I compared French and Latin, and riveted the words of both in my memory by this practice. When proceeding with the Latin verbs, I often sat in the school all midday, and pored on the first page of my schoolfellow Robert Cooper's Greek grammar—the only one I had ever seen. He was then reading Livy and learning Greek. By the help of his book I mastered the letters; but I saw the sense of the Latin verbs in a very indistinct manner. Some boy lent me an old Corderius, and a friend made me a present of Eutropius. I got a common vocabulary from my companion Kerr. I read to my teacher a number of colloquies, and before the end of July was permitted to take lessons in Eutropius. There was a copy of Eutropius in the school that had a literal translation. I *studied this last with great attention, and compared the English and Latin.*"

During the winter, this self-helper pursued his studies in private, while earning a scanty wage by teaching in the farmers' families. From some friends he was fortunate enough to borrow a few Latin books, and for eighteenpence he became the proud possessor of an old copy of Ainsworth's "Latin Dictionary." Every spare moment he employed in pondering upon these treasures. He literally read *through* the dictionary, from the first word to the last. His method, he says, was to revolve the leaves of the letter A, to notice all the principal words and their Greek synonyms, not omitting a glance at the Hebrew; to do the same by B, and so on through the book. He then returned from X and Z to A; and in these winter months accumulated a large stock of Latin and Greek vocabularies. From this exercise, which demanded an extraordinary amount of patience and perseverance, he proceeded to Eutropius, Ovid, and Cæsar. The inverted order of the Latin sentences frequently perplexed him, and he sometimes mistook the sense; but by degrees he learned to read with facility, and to appreciate the beauties of thought and expression of his authors.

The following summer (he was then fifteen years old) was spent with even greater application than any of the preceding. His school work was faithfully and zealously performed, and he read by himself with eager interest whatever books in English, Latin, or Greek came in his way. His practice was to lay down a new and difficult book after it had wearied him; to take up a second, then a third, and to resume this rotation frequently and laboriously. The clergyman of the parish now lent him some of the great Latin and Greek classics, and these he studied with his usual energy and tenacity. Purchasing a copy of Robertson's "Hebrew Grammar," he mastered it, with all its intricacies, in a month. Soon after he obtained a Hebrew dictionary, and as it contained the whole of the Book of Ruth in the original, he justly regarded it as an invaluable acquisition. A still more precious prize was a Hebrew Bible; and thus we find that this boy of fifteen, notwithstanding the difficulties in his way, his poverty, his limited hours for study, his want of suitable instruction, had actually made himself familiar with four languages, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and read several of the best authors in all of them, in the short period of about eighteen months.

A more wonderful instance of fervent diligence and insatiable thirst for knowledge it would be difficult to find. Surely it will act as an inspiration upon the boys who read these pages. It is in the hope that it may encourage them to make a wise and profitable use of their boyhood that I here set down the story, which cannot be told too often, it presents so fine an illustration of the triumph of a persevering and tenacious intellect.

Let us glance for a moment at some of the interesting incidents that characterised the boyhood of Sir Walter Scott. As early as his fifth or sixth year he seems to have shown indications of that genius which was afterwards to enrich our literature with so many immortal works. Mrs. Cockburn, remembered to this day by her beautiful song of "The Flowers of the Forest," spent an evening with Scott's family, and next day described the visit in a letter to a friend. "I last night supped," she says, "at Mr. Walter Scott's. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on—it was the description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm. He lifted his eyes and hands. 'There's the mast gone;' said he, 'crash it goes! they will all perish!' After his agitation he turns to me, 'That is too melancholy,' says he, 'I had better read you something more amusing.' I preferred a little chat, and asked his opinions of Milton and other books he was reading, which he gave me wonderfully. One of his observations was, 'How strange it is that Adam, just new come into the world, should know everything—that must be the poet's fancy,' says he. But when he was told he was created perfect by God, he instantly yielded. When taken to bed last night, he told his aunt he liked that lady. 'What lady?' says she. 'Why, Mrs. Cockburn, for I think she is a *virtuoso like myself*.' 'Dear Walter,' says Aunt Fanny, 'what is a virtuoso?' 'Don't you know? Why, it's one who wishes and will know everything.' Now, sir, you will think this a very silly story. Pray, what age do you suppose this boy to be? Why, twelve or fourteen. No such thing; he is not quite six years old. He has a lame leg, for which he has been a year at Bath, and has acquired the perfect English accent, which he has not lost since he came, and he reads like a Garrick."

Would that every boy was "a virtuoso" in young Walter Scott's sense—that is, a boy who wishes to know, and will know everything!

One day when the boy was sitting at the gate of the house with his attendant, an old and woe-begone mendicant applied for alms. On his retiring, the attendant endeavoured to improve the occasion by remarking to Walter that he should be thankful to God for having placed him above so much want and misery. The child looked up half-wistfully, half-incredulously, and said, "Homer was a beggar." "How do you know that?" inquired his attendant. "Why," answered the little virtuoso, "don't you remember that—

‘Seven Grecian cities strove for Homer dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his bread’?

Young Walter Scott, at the age of nine, was sent to the Edinburgh High School, where he did not rise to more than an average position, though he obtained a tolerable knowledge of the Latin and French languages. He afterwards regretted that, as a scholar, he had not given greater attention to his studies. "I glanced like a meteor," he says, "from one end of the class to the other, and commonly disgusted my kind master as much by negligence and frivolity as I occasionally pleased him by flashes of intellect and talent. Among my companions my good nature and flow of ready imagination rendered me very popular. Boys are uncommonly just in their feelings, and at least equally generous. My lameness, and the efforts which I made to supply that disadvantage by making up in address what I wanted in activity, engaged the latter principle in my favour, and in the winter play-hours, when hard exercise was impossible, my tales used to assemble an admiring audience round Luckie Brown's fireside, and happy was he that could sit next to the inexhaustible narrator." Fortunately he derived very considerable benefit from his home studies, and thus gathered up a large and varied stock of general information, in which most boys are sadly deficient.

Here is his own account:—

"My mother joined to a light and happy temper of mind a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination. She was sincerely devout, but her religion was, as became her sex, of a cast less austere than my father's. Still the discipline of

the Presbyterian Sabbath was severely strict, and I think injudiciously so. . . .

"My week-day tasks were more agreeable. My lameness and my solitary habits had made me a tolerable reader, and my hours of leisure were usually spent in reading aloud to my mother Pope's translation of Homer, which, excepting a few traditionary ballads and the songs in Allan Ramsay's 'Evergreen,' was the first poetry which I perused. My mother had good natural taste and great feeling. She used to make me pause upon those passages which expressed generous and worthy sentiments; and if she could not divert me from those which were descriptive of battle and tumult, she contrived at least to divide my attention between them. My own enthusiasm, however, was chiefly awakened by the wonderful and the terrible—the common taste of children, but in which I have remained a child even unto this day. . . .

"My father did not trust our education solely to our High School lessons. We had a tutor at home—a young man of an excellent disposition and a laborious student. He was bred to the Kirk, but unfortunately took such a very strong turn to fanaticism that he afterwards resigned an excellent living in a seaport town merely because he could not persuade the mariners of the guilt of setting sail of a Sabbath; in which, by the by, he was less likely to be successful, as sailors, from an opinion that it is a fortunate omen, always choose to weigh anchor on that day. The calibre of this young man's understanding may be judged of by this anecdote, but in other respects he was a faithful and accurate instructor, and from him chiefly I learned writing and arithmetic. I repeated to him my French lessons, and studied with him my themes in the classics, but not classically. I also acquired, by disputing with him (for this he readily permitted), some knowledge of school divinity and Church history, and a great acquaintance in particular with the old books describing the early history of the Church of Scotland, the wars and sufferings of the Covenanters, and so forth. I, with a head on fire for chivalry, was a Cavalier; my friend was a Roundhead: I was a Tory, and he was a Whig. I hated Presbyterians, and admired Montrose with his victorious Highlanders: he liked the Presbyterian Ulysses, the dark and politic Argyll; so that we never wanted subjects of dispute, but our disputes were always amicable."

His biographer remarks that, at twelve years of age, if he had not made more than ordinary progress in the routine academical studies, he had gained a considerable knowledge of English literature. In the intervals of school-hours he read with eagerness books of history, poetry, voyages, travels, knight-errantry, fairy tales, and romances. One evening he found in his mother's dressing-room some odd volumes of Shakespeare, and Scott never forgot the rapture with which he sat up *in his shirt* reading them by the light of a fire in the apartment, until the bustle of the family rising from supper warned him it was time to creep back to his bed, where he was supposed to have been comfortably installed since nine o'clock. He was also familiar with the poems of Ossian and Spenser, the latter being a particular favourite. He was too young, of course, to follow up or appreciate the allegory of the "Faery Queen;" but all the knights and ladies, and dragons and giants, Una and Belphebe, Britomart and the Duessa, Sir Gawain and Merlin, were to him real and actual personages, whose adventures inspired him with the liveliest interest, with sympathy for the good and abhorrence of the bad. Thus we see that his mind was well stored with miscellaneous information, of which the future novelist and poet did not fail to make good use. Of the extent to which he was absorbed by his favourite books we may form a notion from what he tells us respecting Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry." "I remember well," he writes, "the spot where I read these volumes for the first time. It was beneath a large platanus-tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbour in the garden. The summer day sped onward so fast that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was still found entranced in my intellectual banquet. To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my schoolfellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently or with half the enthusiasm."

Scott's example may be pressed upon the attention of the

reader ; for it is a common mistake of boys to suppose that by "study" is meant the mere preparation of the daily lessons included in the school curriculum ; whereas much of that information which is most valuable in after-life can be gathered only by assiduous reading "out of school." The manuals and text-books of the schools are introductory only to the great works of the great writers ; and it is by the perusal of these that the intellect will be fed and nourished, the judgment corrected, the taste refined, the imagination cultivated. Upon this point, however, I have already spoken ; and here I am content to point to the example of Sir Walter Scott as an illustration and confirmation of my remarks. Boys may derive many valuable lessons from the boyhood of men who have risen to eminence. They may see what qualities have contributed to their success, what virtues they have possessed, in what direction their energies have been guided. They may ask themselves in what, and how far, they fall short of their examples ; they may find an encouragement in what has been done by those who went before, who ran the race which they are now preparing to run in their turn. And when they perceive that these good and great men owed everything to their perseverance, their tenacity of effort, their force of character, their strength of purpose, will they not say, "Let us go and do likewise?" It has been well observed that in no situation in life, be it what it may, is the work of mental cultivation impossible to him who in good earnest sets about it. But it must be *begun in boyhood*. He who loses those young, fresh, and fertile years can never make up the loss, can never get a good place in the race ; in the great life-battle he will be found to fall into the rear ranks, and there will have leisure to regret that he wasted the time which would have enabled him to stand shoulder to shoulder among the foremost. Boys, shall the warning I venture to give you be given in vain ?

A glance at the boyhood of Robert Blake may be permitted to us. Who has not read with heart that burnt within him the story of the exploits of that great "admiral and general-at-sea" ? How he defeated the Dutch sea-kings in many a desperate fight, and carried his victorious ships into the harbour of Santa Cruz in defiance of the Spanish guns ? He *was* the eldest son of Humphrey Blake, gentleman and

merchant of Bridgewater; and in that quaint, quiet old city they still show the ancient and substantial mansion, with its oak wainscots and ornamented ceilings. The fair gardens sloped to the river Parret, the windows commanded a fine view of the Quantock hills. Among the earliest objects that caught the boy's young eyes would be the masts of the shipping in the stream—masts decked (to use Mr. Hannay's words) with the colours of more than one nation, and suggesting who knows what visions of distant purple seas, and fierce Algerine corsairs, and all that could stimulate the heart and waken the wonder of a bold strong lad. We cannot doubt but that such influences, joined to his father's talk of those strange shores he had visited and the strange people he had seen, must have deeply impressed young Blake's imagination. Of a serious and steadfast temper, he took naturally to his book, and applied himself with so much diligence and such success, that at the age of sixteen he exchanged Bridgewater Grammar School for St. Alban's Hall, Oxford. Afterwards he removed to Wadham College, and in all he spent no fewer than nine years at the University. So it came to pass that, when circumstances made him a soldier and a sailor, he was fitted for whatever responsibility fell upon him, by reason not only of the natural gravity of his character but the extent of his attainments, which even Clarendon mentions with respect. His manhood, sober, calm, virtuous, and thoughtful, was the logical consequence of a grave, studious, and noble boyhood. He began in life as he ended. The measure of his steps in his early years was that which he preserved to the last. We know that, as a boy, he was distinguished by a certain strain of melancholy,—that serious view of life and its trials which is common to all with a keen sense of duty; yet was he not without appreciation of a humorous quip or "quiddity." What he was as a man let us learn from an impartial critic:—"He was an antique Roman kind of man, of the early Roman breed—willing to serve the state when it needed his services, content to stay at home when it did not want them. This private, simple, pious character contrasts significantly with the turbulent vanity and levity, the morbid spasmodic greatness, the feverish yet pedantic cleverness, of the modern revolutionists of Europe. Above all, there was nothing *theatrical* about the great Puritan. He was a

homely West-country gentleman, middle-sized, of firm and generous, yet not at all romantic air and expression, most orderly and pious in his household, and sacred words ever ready for the guidance of life; but, for the rest, a kindly laugh, and known to take a quiet cup of sack and a pipe at bedtime. Such was Blake."

A striking contrast to the English sea-king's grave and self-contained character is presented by the fervid, glowing, sensitive temperament of the great musician, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. His love of music and his wonderful genius for it were both conspicuous in his earliest years. He was yet an infant when it was observed that he listened with evident pleasure to his sister's practice on the harpsichord, and that if he obtained access to the instrument he took a delight in finding out the consonances on it. He was not four years old when his father began to give him lessons every day, the lessons varying in length from half-an-hour to an hour; and in his fifth year he began to compose melodies, which his father wrote down from his dictation. The extreme delicacy of his organisation was proved by his aversion to the sound of brass instruments. His father mistook it for an affectation, and by way of use compelled him to listen to the notes of a trumpet; but the effect upon his nerves was such that he would have swooned had not the experiment been discontinued. A wise friend, Schachtner, trumpeter in the Archbishop of Salzburg's family, fearing that so precocious a genius might be ruined if unduly forced, frequently engaged the wondrous boy in play; but in no game would Mozart engage of which music was not an element. If Schachtner carried a toy across the room, he was required to step in time and to whistle a march as accompaniment; and all the boy's own motions were made in accordance with the appropriate melodies which he improvised. He was six years old when his father took him and his elder sister on a tour for the exhibition of their musical talents; and at a Franciscan convent in Austria he surprised the monks by the taste and skill with which he played the organ. At the imperial court he was rapturously received. The Emperor Francis I. was a genuine connoisseur, and listened with delight and admiration to his marvellous performances. The tour lasted for several months, but it caused no interruption to Mozart's

studies. These were his chief happiness ; and, almost untaught, he acquired such facility on the violin that he sustained the second violin part at sight in some difficult trios which the musician Wurzel had submitted to his father.

In 1764, when he was eight years old, he visited England with his father and sister. Christian Bach, the composer, received them warmly, and introduced them to George III. In August, his father being too ill to bear the sound of the harpsichord, Wolfgang began the composition of his first symphony, the orchestral parts of which his sister copied sheet by sheet as he completed the score. It was played with great success at the public concerts. The following advertisement, which appeared in a London newspaper on the 7th of May 1765, is full of significance, and throws a strong light on Mozart's boyhood :—

“ Mr. Mozart, the father of the celebrated young musical family, who have so justly raised the admiration of the greatest musicians of Europe, intending at the end of the month to leave England, proposes, before his departure, to give to the public in general an opportunity of hearing these young prodigies perform, both in public and private, by giving, Monday, the 13th of May, a concert, which will chiefly be conducted by his son, a boy of eight years of age, with all the overtures of his own composition. Tickets may be had, at 5s. each, of Mr. Mozart, at Mr. Williamson's, in Thrift [now Frith] Street, Soho ; where such ladies and gentlemen who choose to come themselves and take either tickets or the sonatas composed by this boy and dedicated to Her Majesty (price 10s. 6d.), will find the family at home every day in the week from twelve to two o'clock, and have opportunity of putting his talents to a more particular proof, by giving him anything to play at sight, or any music without a bass, which he will write upon the spot, without recurring to his harpsichord.”

This was not a healthy life for a boy of nine years old, and that his genius was not weakened by such premature effort is a proof of its amazing strength and spontaneity. In July the Mozarts left England, and after visiting the principal towns in Flanders, Holland, and the South of France, returned to Salzburg on May 17th. It is said that a prophet is not honoured in his own country, but the Salzburgians were prepared to honour their young musician by the reports which reached them

of his triumphs in foreign lands. The Archbishop alone seems to have been incredulous; and to satisfy himself that the boy's celebrity was not undeserved, he ordered him to compose an oratorio for performance in an occasional church service, locking him up for a week in a chamber in his own palace, and allowing no one to see or speak to him except the servant who took him his meals. The boy finished his task in the allotted time, and the oratorio was performed in the cathedral, to the astonishment and delight of all who heard it.

But genius, even genius so rich and spontaneous as that of Mozart's, needs cultivation; and Mozart, boy as he was, prosecuted his studies with the most methodical industry. Under his father's careful direction, he went through the works of the great Italian and German composers, analysing them critically and examining into their mode of construction. The result was seen in his cantata of "Apollo and Hyacinthus," which is characterised by its scientific form and skilful harmonic progressions. Visiting Vienna in 1767, he was commanded to write an Italian opera for performance at the Imperial Theatre, and produced "La Finta Semplice" in the Italian style, which he followed up with "Bastien und Bastienne" in the German. Two years later, a boy of fourteen years old, he started with his father on a journey to Italy, and at Milan, Verona, Bologna, won "golden opinions" from the critics as well as from the public. Proceeding to Rome, he was present at the solemn ceremonies of Passion Week, and there accomplished the remarkable feat of committing to memory and transcribing Allegri's "Miserere," the use of which had been rigorously restricted to the Pope's chapel, the singers being prohibited, under pain of excommunication, from carrying copies of their several parts out of the sacred edifice. After a single hearing Mozart was able to write out the music; and on listening to it a second time he so perfected his copy, that when, at a later period, it was compared with the original, not one error or discrepancy could be detected! The excitable Neapolitans were so impressed by the boy-musician's improvisation and harpsichord playing that they attributed them to magic, and believed that a ring which he wore lent to his left hand its exceptional dexterity and strength. From Naples he returned to Milan, where the marvellous boy initiated his dramatic career with the opera of "Mitridate, Re di Ponto,"

in which it is easy to trace the passionate imagination and exquisite sentiment that were afterwards so richly developed in "*Don Giovanni*" and "*Le Nozze di Figaro*."

Many boys, who make no great figure at school, because, perhaps, they do not get into the right groove, lay up at home a good store of material for use in after life. Of Patrick Fraser Tytler, the Scottish historian, no brilliant academical career is recorded. In truth, his sister says of him, that as a boy he was by no means remarkable, except, indeed—and my readers should note the exception—except for the invariable truthfulness, openness, and perfect simplicity of his character. He was educated at the Edinburgh High School, where he joined in the street fights or "bickers" with a considerable amount of pugnacious spirit. Though he showed no greater affection for Ovid or Æschylus than is shown by the majority of boys, he was very fond of listening to old songs and historical legends, and these influences gradually developed in him a love of letters. When he first turned to books, those he chose were of a picturesque and romantic character, such as Percy's "*Reliques*"¹ and Spenser's "*Faery Queen*," which have rightly been described as the best food for a healthy young mind. Such a mind, while balanced and steadied in the world of facts by its natural soundness, should unquestionably be "inspired and enlivened by glimpses of the world of fancy." The commonplace conventionalism of social life needs to be counteracted by an appeal to the imaginative element in our nature. A "*History of the Moors*," a "very odd-looking book," was also one of Tytler's favourites, and he would lie "stretched all his length on the carpet in his father's library" reading it for hours together. No doubt it fostered that love of historical studies which afterwards made him an historian. In his seventeenth year he was sent to a school in the South of England, and there he worked hard to make up for the deficiencies of his earlier boyhood, "grinding away" most resolutely at Greek, Latin, and English literature. And thus his boyhood, on the whole, proved no unfit preparation for his studious after life, and the boy who pored over his-

¹ Burns and Sir Walter Scott, not to mention other poets, drank in their inspiration from this attractive book, which largely contributed to the revival of a true poetic taste in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

torical ballads and old histories was unconsciously training himself to write the history of his native land.

In the Caribbean Sea, in the August of 1826, was cruising H.M. schooner "Magpie," under the command of a young lieutenant, Edward Smith. He had been despatched in search of a pirate vessel which for some time had infested the western shores of Cuba. On the evening of the 26th, the "Magpie" lay becalmed, "like a painted ship upon a painted ocean," off the Colorados rocks, when, about eight o'clock, a slight westerly breeze arose, and the sails were spread. In about an hour, however, the wind suddenly veered to the south, and a small dark cloud, "no bigger than a man's hand," floated above the moon. Recognising this omen of the coming tempest, Lieutenant Smith instantly ordered all hands on deck, took in every stitch of canvas, and made his vessel as snug and taut as possible, to avert the danger. The cloud grew larger and darker; for a few seconds a deadly hush was upon the sea, and then in the distance was heard the sound of a roar and a rush, which rapidly drew nearer, nearer, and still nearer; while the waters, calm all around as a mountain lake on a summer's noon, heaved and swelled in masses of creamy foam before the black wall that swept irresistibly onward. What a din filled the air, like the shouts and cries of contending armies! How the gale shrieked and raved as it seemed to pour headlong from the bosom of the darkling heavens! Hitherto the schooner had rested securely on the rippling wave, but all at once the black wall of billows rushed upon her, and the hurricane caught her in its furious grasp. "Stand by to cut away the masts!" cried the lieutenant. Too late! Already the ship was on her broadside, and in a few seconds she had heeled right over and was sinking fast. For a moment Meldrum, the gunner's mate, caught a glimpse of his comrades struggling for life in the "hell of waters;" then he struck out desperately to get clear of the in-draught of the sinking vessel; found something floating, and clutching at it, secured first one oar and then another. Meanwhile the storm had passed, its fury was spent, and the sea was again as hushed and serene as if no winds had vexed its surface since the first days of creation.

Looking anxiously around for some sign of his shipmates, Meldrum heard, to his great joy, the voice of the lieutenant

asking if any one were near. With six of his men, the lieutenant was clinging to a boat which had floated up clear of the wreck. In their transport of delight, so many had rushed to take advantage of this means of safety that they had capsized her; and though all the ship's company, some twenty-four in number, were clinging to her, some had stretched themselves across her keel, and thus had rendered her useless, except as a float.

The lieutenant ordered all to quit their position that she might be righted. Two seamen were then placed in her to bale out the water with their hats, while the rest supported themselves by hanging round the gunwales till she was light enough to admit them. But just as the baling began, one of the men cried out that he saw the fin of a shark, and in the dread of falling a prey to the monster, prudence was forgotten for the moment, and discipline set aside; there was a struggle to get into the boat, and again it capsized. Again, however, the young lieutenant's calmness restored order; the boat was righted, the balers were set to work, and the men, by the lieutenant's direction, splashed the water with their legs to frighten away the enemy. At length the boat was able to hold four men; morning broke happily over the sounding sea; all promised well, and every heart beat with glad anticipations, when again arose the cry, "A shark! a shark!" and at least fifteen of these terrible foes dashed in among them. For the third time, in the not unnatural spasm of terror which possessed every mind, the boat was overturned; but, composed, patient, and resolute, the lieutenant recalled his men to their obedience. The boat was righted, the balers resumed their task, and the men, with white faces, still hung outside, while the sharks swam in and out amongst them, at first apparently in a frolicsome mood. But a shriek proclaimed that one of the creatures had seized a victim; and blood once tasted, it was known that escape had become impossible. Still the lieutenant, holding by the stern, encouraged his men to keep steady, and bade them be patient until the boat could safely hold them. Successive cries of agony and the crimsoned waters told, however, a dreadful tale; one after another was torn from his hold, and at last only six remained, when, as young Edward Smith looked into the boat for a moment, he forgot to splash, and—a leg was bitten off! With heroic composure he uttered

not a moan lest he should frighten his men ; and they were ignorant of what had happened until the murderous jaws seized the other limb, when, with a cry which nature extorted from him, he let go his hold. Two of the men promptly caught him in their arms and lifted him into the boat. His generous unselfishness was not to be subdued by the agony he suffered, and as he lay, mutilated and bleeding, he called to him a lad named Wilson, whom, as the youngest, he thought the most likely to survive, and requested him to inform the admiral that he was bound for Cape Ontario in search of the pirate when the calamity occurred. "Tell him," he added, "that my men have done their duty, and that no blame attaches to them. I have only one favour to ask of him, that he will promote Meldrum to be a gunner."

He then shook each man by the hand and bade him farewell, with a word of cheer for all as long as he could speak ; but exposed to a burning sun, and without food or water, his strength failed, and he had sunk into silence, when towards evening, on another alarm from the sharks, a hasty movement of the men again upset the boat, and his sufferings were ended in the waves.

The only officer now left was a young mate named Maclean, who, nobly emulating the heroism of the lieutenant, urged the men to right the boat, which, as no more than four survived—himself, Meldrum, the boy Wilson, and a seaman—could hold them all. They were exhausted, however, with their long struggle in the water, their want of food and drink, and exposed during the day to a tropical sun ; the oars were lost, and they drifted at the mercy of wind and waves. At about three o'clock in the morning the lad Wilson and the seaman were seized with delirium, sprang overboard and perished. The catastrophe was a heavy shock to Maclean and Meldrum, but they mastered their nervous terrors, and continued to bale out the water until the boat was so nearly dry, that they could lie down in her. Then Heaven in its mercy sent a deep sleep upon them, to which no doubt they owed their preservation from insanity. When they awoke the sun was high above the horizon. The prospect before them was one that might have shook the soul of the sternest of the ancient Stoics. They were *alone in a frail boat under a burning sky ; the sea around them swarmed with sharks ; for thirty-six hours they had been with-*

out food ; but though suffering acutely from thirst, they had the strength of will to refrain from drinking salt water, knowing that a temporary relief would be dearly purchased by possible loss of reason, at all events by greater suffering. To speak to one another they lacked the courage ; and so, in the very shadow of death, they sat, silent, motionless, one in the bow, the other in the stern, looking with lack-lustre eyes out upon the monotonous waste of waters.

Happily about eight o'clock in the morning, a white speck rose upon the horizon, and the two sufferers gasped out simultaneously, "A sail ! a sail !" Hope once more kindled in their hearts ; they clasped each other's hands ; with fixed gaze they watched the course of the vessel, of which the hull was soon clearly visible. She was bearing down upon them—thank God ! Yes, she came nearer and ever nearer ; she was within half a mile ! But what caused that sudden change of countenance ? Why did the flush of hope give way to the pallor of despair ? Alas ! she tacked—she stood away in a different direction ; and though they waved their jackets, and raised a hoarse shout of agonised entreaty, continued to sail away and away. The drifting boat and its wretched occupants had not been noticed.

It was then that the gunner's mate announced his deliberate resolve of swimming to the receding vessel. He was a strong man ; but his strength had been reduced by long thirst and hunger. He was a good swimmer ; but neither strength nor skill could avail against those monsters of the deep which had been the destruction of so many comrades. But what else could be done ? Exhausted nature could not hold out much longer ; to remain was certain death, whereas in this one supreme effort there was at least a chance of salvation. So he adhered to his resolution. He said some words of farewell to his officer, and begged of him, if he saw a shark in pursuit, not to let him know ; shook hands, uttered a brief prayer to God for help and protection, and sprang overboard. Maclean at first was disposed to join him, but he was not strong enough for the attempt, and it would have lessened Meldrum's chances of success. So he forced himself to be patient, and waved his jacket and cheered to encourage the brave adventurer. Meldrum meanwhile, aware that he was swimming for very life, *breasted the waves with desperate energy, splashing as he*

went to scare away the sharks, and shouting in order to attract the attention of the men on board the departing vessel. However, they made no sign ; and when he had swam about two-thirds of the distance his heart sank, his strength gave way, and he was on the point of resigning himself to float motionless until some shark terminated his sufferings, when a head appeared on deck ! He waved his arms, raised his body in the water—he was seen ! The ship hove to and lowered a boat ; he was rescued from the very jaws of death, but he still found vigour enough to tell his story in a few broken words, and guide his saviours to the succour of his companion.

I have not told this “true story” without an object. The safety of Meldrum and Maclean was due to the example of heroism and constancy shown by Lieutenant Smith, and the young officer’s heroism and constancy were the result of the admirable training he had received from his mother. It is on record that his boyhood was one of great promise, that it was illustrated and exalted by a high sense of duty, great sobriety of conduct, and a fearless and manly character. Who will be surprised at this ? Men cannot face without being unnerved and overcome such emergencies as young Edward Smith was called upon to face unless they have undergone an adequate moral and intellectual discipline. And for this reason I have sought to impress upon my readers in the preceding pages the value of the necessity of regarding one’s boyhood as the stage of preparation for a useful and honourable manhood. Unless you accustom yourselves to habits of reflection, steadfastness, and firmness ; unless you cultivate your faculties with assiduous diligence, you will assuredly fail in after life should any great effort be demanded of you. This reflection may well make you pause if you feel an inclination to waste your youthful days and dissipate your fresh young energies. Instead of laying up a reserve of power, too many boys most thoughtlessly waste the resources they have at their disposal, just as raw and inexperienced troops on first going into action blaze away all their ammunition to no useful purpose.

You will say that experience and reflection are admirable things, but that they are not to be expected of mere boys, and probably you will quote the old adage about “old heads on young shoulders.” Be it so. I, for one, do not expect to find an old head on a pair of young shoulders ; I should think

the combination, if it occurred, as exceptional and unpleasant as those painter's devices to which Horace alludes by way of warning :—

“ Humano capite cervicem pictor equinam
Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superna.”

But boys might, with advantage, be more thoughtful than the majority of them are; and, at all events, they might learn to listen to *advice*. We who have sailed through those treacherous seas, and learned what shoals and quicksands beset the voyager, the rock that threatens him on the one hand, the whirlpool that imperils him on the other,—we who know what and how terrible are the storms he must encounter, and how intricate is the only channel that leads to safety,—we might be trusted, we elders, grey with years and bowed with anxieties, to lay down a chart of the voyage. But, alas! who listens? Who heeds our warnings? Who adopts our counsels? The rash confidence of youth laughs at the timely word; its impetuous presumption makes light of the difficulties which those who have laboriously striven against them know to be so serious. Acting on Spenser's principle, that “much more profitable and genuine is doctrine by example than by rule,” the writer in these pages has, however, trusted to “example” rather than to “advice;” and he puts before his readers these anecdotes of boyhood that they may see for themselves the qualities and “rule” of conduct by which boys may hope to develop into good and great men.

I like to lighten my pages by the introduction of an appropriate story or illustration, and though I refrain from giving much advice, I wish to prove that advice is well worth taking, when given impartially and with the weight of experience. My proof shall be rested on an amusing Eastern apologue narrated by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. It seems that one day, when a certain Khan of Tartary was riding out with his great officers of state, he fell in with a dervise who cried aloud :—“To him that will give me a hundred dinars, I will give a piece of good advice.” And again and again he cried :—“A hundred dinars for a piece of good advice. Who bids? Who bids?”

Now people will not only not *pay* for good advice, but they will hardly take it when it is offered *gratis*; and so it came to pass that the dervise might as well have shouted in the desert for any profit he derived from it until the Khan passed by. But he, sagacious and observant, as sovereigns ought to be, felt assured there was something more than ordinary in the dervise's strange declaration. Checking his horse, he said to the dervise:—"What advice is that which you offer for a hundred dinars?"

"Sire," replied the wary sage, "I shall be most thankful to tell you as soon as you order the money to be paid to me."

More and more convinced that the advice would be worth having, the Khan ordered the hundred dinars to be handed to the dervise at once. "And now," he said, "quick; what have you to tell me?"

"Sire, my advice is, Begin nothing without considering what the end may be."

Which seems only a more elegant form of the old maxim, "Look before you leap."¹ Or, as the Latin has it, "*Prima Argo committenda sunt; extrema Briareo.*" That is:—At the outset have a hundred eyes; at the end, a hundred arms.

The officers of state, amused by what they chose to consider a piece of ridiculous impertinence, looked at the Khan, expecting that he would immediately order the dervise to be severely punished. But the Khan, observing their surprise and amusement, said:—"I see nothing to laugh at in the dervise's advice. On the contrary, I am persuaded that men, if they more frequently practised it, would escape many calamities. Indeed, so convinced am I of its wisdom, that I shall have it engraved on my plate, and written on the walls of my palace, so that it may be ever before me."

And having thanked the dervise, he returned home, to give instant directions to his chief Bey to see the words of wisdom—*golden* words, considering the price paid for them!—engraved on his plate, and written on the walls of his palace.

Not long after this occurrence, a great noble of the court,

¹ There is much virtue in taking your time; more haste, less speed. The great French statesman, Talleyrand, was wont to say:—"Toute ma vie je me suis fait une règle de ne jamais me presser et j'ai toujours été à temps"—(All my life I have made it a rule never to be in a hurry, and I ~~was~~ always been in time).

a man of singular pride and ambition, resolved to destroy the Khan and raise himself to the Tartar throne. In order to carry out his nefarious design, he secured the confidence of one of the Khan's surgeons, to whom he gave a poisoned lancet, saying :—"Bleed the king with this lancet, and I will give thee ten thousand pieces of gold. Moreover, when I ascend the throne, thou shalt be my vizier."

The base surgeon, dazzled by these splendid promises, assented to the proposal, and an opportunity soon offered of executing his evil project. The Khan sent for this man to bleed him; he thrust the poisoned lancet into a concealed pocket, and hastened into the royal presence. The Khan's arm was tied; the fatal lancet was produced. It was about to be plunged into the throbbing vein, when the surgeon's eye suddenly rested on these words at the bottom of the silver bason :—"Begin nothing without considering what the end may be!" He immediately paused, for the thought crossed his mind :—"If I bleed the Khan with this lancet, he will die, and I shall be seized and put to a cruel death; then of what use to me will be all the gold in the world, and the viziership to boot?" Returning the lancet to his pocket, he drew forth another.

The Khan, observing this movement, and that the surgeon was much embarrassed, asked why he had changed the lancet so suddenly. He answered :—"Because the point was broken;" but the Khan, doubting his statement, commanded him to show it. Whereupon he became so agitated that the Khan's suspicions increased. "There is treachery in all this," he exclaimed; "tell me instantly what it means, or your head shall be severed from your body." Trembling with fear, the surgeon promised to make a full confession if the Khan would only pardon his guilt. To this the Khan assented, and he then related the whole matter, acknowledging that, had it not been for the words in the bason, he should have used the poisoned lancet.

The Khan summoned his court, and ordered the traitorous noble to be executed. Turning to his officers of state, he said :—"You now see that the advice of the dervise, which you treated so contemptuously, is most valuable; it has saved my life. Search out this dervise, that I may reward him amply for his wise maxim."

Observe that this story has a double moral. It teaches us

that it is well to listen to good advice, and that before we enter upon any undertaking we ought to weigh its consequences.

Among our minor poets a writer of no inconsiderable merit is the Rev. Thomas Whytehead, M.A., who closed a brief career in 1843 in the missionary service of the Church of England. The profound self-sacrificing devotion of his manhood was prefigured by the earnest piety of his boyhood. In his early childhood he evinced a remarkable intelligence, and at the age of four could read aloud the historical writings of the Old Testament with great accuracy. His chief delight was in his studies, and no childish sport had such an attraction for him as the perusal of the works of the English classic authors. It is told of him that his peculiar amusement, and the one he most heartily enjoyed, was to retire into the barn, and there, seated on the straw, to read with one of his sisters Scott's "Lady of the Lake."

In his ninth year he was sent to the grammar school at Beverley, where the headmaster was surprised by the vigour of his talents and the extent of his attainments; for he pursued his studies under the twofold disadvantage of weak eyesight and delicate health. His poetical tastes manifested themselves while he was a pupil at Beverley, and he wrote there a graceful sacred poem, "Hosanna to the Son of David." He appears, when only twelve years old, to have been reading Homer's *Odyssey* and Horace. Promoted to the higher school, where F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, was one of his schoolfellows, he gained distinction as a writer of the best Latin epigrams, carrying off the prize from his seniors. It was at this time that he addressed to an elder brother a remarkable letter, which came evidently from his heart, and was thoroughly sincere, though few boys could write it without incurring the imputation of hypocrisy.

"Please write soon," he says, "and give me some advice concerning what I am going to tell you. R. and B. say their prayers; but then they and all the other boys talk so badly on Sundays, and every day use the Bible in common talk, and sometimes read chapters and then laugh at them. Do not think I say this for pride; but I want to know what I ought to do. They are always trying to make me join them, and laugh at me; but I do not care for that; but then I have no one to

talk to, and to make a friend of, nearer than Hull. But now I will tell you of myself. I keep making resolutions which last, perhaps, for a week or two; then, perhaps, I begin to grow light, and levity, I find, is my most besetting sin. I really wish and try all in my power to serve God, but I do not love Him enough. My motives are only sordid; I pray for love, but I fear I do not pray aright. Please write soon, like a brother. I tell you all my griefs, and hope you will forgive all my weaknesses. I sometimes fear that God will not pardon me; but, oh! levity is the worst. It is this sort of levity: if I have been thinking or praying, when I come near the boys I so soon forget what I have been doing; and though I do not talk, yet I think, and am on the point of often speaking, bad. I wish to be more sober and serious. Oh, pray for me! And I am not thankful. Pray give me your advice. I really wish to be holy, as I have had a small taste of heavenly comfort. But that is all my motive; and I know I never can be good without love, but I cannot get it. Oh, pardon me! Remember I am a poor, silly boy. Tell me what to do to make me more guarded against sin."

Every sentence in this letter glows with the life blood of an earnest spirit. Thomas Whytehead evidently strove to keep himself free from sin, and though we may think that his self-consciousness was excessive, and that he judged his feelings with unnecessary rigour, we cannot but admire the strength of his longings after good. To be "more sober and serious," to be "holy!" Alas! how few boys are capable of such lofty aspirations! This lad of thirteen thought of something more than his cricket and football—of something more even than his lessons and private studies; he knew the evil in his nature—as, for instance, his tendency to levity—and he was painfully anxious to purify himself from it. And observe, he notes what is undoubtedly a widespread vice among boys, their application of ridicule to sacred things. Some boys seem to think it a sign of manliness to act and talk irreverently, to laugh and whisper during prayers, to extract amusement from the pages of God's Word, to repeat the profane jest, to neglect their private devotions and private perusal of the Bible. Can it be that in this they see anything really manly or worthy of imitation? In most cases, I think, it is due to the influence of bad companions. The boy hears the loose jest and blasphemous

parody; at first it shocks him, but by constant repetition he grows familiar with it; he takes it up at last and pollutes his own lips with it; use becomes second nature, and he learns to find a pleasure in what originally disgusted him. Plato, on a certain occasion, blamed a boy for playing at some foolish game. "Thou findest fault with me for a trifle," said the boy. "But custom," replied Plato, "is not a trifle." It is not a trifle to listen to improper words, for soon it will become custom to speak them.

In nine cases out of ten, I think, talent shows itself in childhood. We know from the vigour of the sapling that it will grow up a sturdy tree. Charles Kingsley, the poet, novelist, naturalist, essayist, and divine, was a precocious child, and wrote poems and sermons at four years of age. A favourite amusement of his (as it was, be it said, of the present writer) was to make a little pulpit in his nursery, arranging the chairs to represent the congregation, and then, putting on his pinafore as a surplice, he preached away to his heart's content. His mother, unknown to him, took down his sermons as he delivered them, and showed them to the Bishop of Peterborough, who thought them so wonderful for such a young child, that he begged they might be preserved. It may amuse the reader to see a specimen:—"It is not right to fight. Honesty has no chance against stealing. Christ has shown us true religion. We must follow God, and not follow the devil; for if we follow the devil we shall go into that everlasting fire, and if we follow God we shall go to heaven. When the tempter came to Christ in the wilderness and told Him to make the stones into bread, He said, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' He has given us a sign and an example how we should overcome the devil. It is written in the Bible that we should love our neighbour, and not covet his house, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor his wife, nor anything that is his." This is remarkable enough as proceeding from a boy of four years old, but even more remarkable is the following poem, which he wrote eight months later:—

"When morning's beam first lights us,
And the cock's shrill voice is undone,
The owl flies from her retreat,
And the bat does fly away,
And morning's beam lightens every spray,
The sun shows forth his splendid train.

Everybody is rising ;
Boys and girls go to school ;
Everybody is at work ;
Everybody is busy.
The bee wakes from her sleep to gather honey ;
But the drone and the queen bee lie still
In the hive,
And a bee guards them.
Be busy when thou canst."

All the anecdotes which are told of his childhood testify to his conscientiousness and his earnest desire for knowledge. One day, when he and his brothers were playing together, they had—what was rare enough amongst them—a quarrel. His mother, on coming into the room, took the part of his brothers, which he resented, angrily exclaiming that he wished she was not his mother. Afterwards he grieved deeply over his thoughtless saying, and going in tears to his old nurse, begged her to take him up to his room. Another of the servants remarked that his mamma would be sure to forgive him. "She *has* forgiven me ; but don't *cant*, Elizabeth (I saw you blush). It isn't mamma's forgiveness I want, but God's." The amount of miscellaneous information he had collected was surprising ; and a boy friend, now an Essex clergyman, recollects how, about this time, when Charles was repeating a Latin lesson to his father, he fixed his eyes on the fire in the grate, and gradually grew very restless. At last, during a pause in the Latin, he exclaimed :—" I do declare, papa, there is pyrites in the coal !"

His early years were spent in the Fen country, and its scenery was never obliterated from his mind. His father, who, though a laborious parish priest, was also a keen sportsman, used to mount him on his horse in front of the keeper on shooting-days to bring home the game-bag ; and on these occasions his watchful eyes took note of every feature of the landscape. And though he removed with his family to Devonshire when he was eleven years old, he could still, in later life, recall the aspects and characteristics of the Fens ; the broad lagoon, ringed round with dark green alders and pale green reeds ; the marshy places, where the coot clanked, and the bittern boomed, and the sedge-bird whistled ; and the shining meres, over which the wildfowl screamed, and croaked, and piped. But the impress of the Devonshire scenery was still

more profound, and may be traced and felt in all his writings. His father's new home was at Clovelly, on the romantic coast of North Devon; and there Charles Kingsley and his brothers had their boat and their ponies, and enjoyed a thousand new and delightful experiences. It was there that Charles fed his love of natural history and cherished his imaginative faculty. At the age of twelve he was sent to a private school at Clifton, from which, in the following year, he was transferred to the Helston Grammar School. He was at that time a tall, slight boy, with a keen visage, of great bodily activity, high-spirited, earnest, energetic. Though not a close student, he was an eager reader, and greatly partial to out-of-the-way lore. A remarkable boy, and original almost to the verge of eccentricity, but a thorough English boy, fond of sport, of out-of-door life, and "up to any enterprise." One who knew him well in his schoolboy days says, that of him more than of most men who have become famous might be said, "the boy was father of the man." The quick and fervid spirit, the adventurous courage, the love of truth, the impatience of wrong, the ardent sympathy that distinguished Kingsley in his manhood were all in the boy, as were also the eagerness in the pursuit of physical knowledge, the close observation of the sights and sounds of nature, and the same earnestness in tracing facts to principles.

I have spoken of Charles Kingsley as strong and active, but at games he was not expert. He never made "a score" at cricket. In all feats of agility, however—in all enterprises which required boldness and decision—he was among the foremost. The following anecdote will serve as an illustration. The playground was separated from a field on the opposite side by a lane not only narrow but very deep. To jump from the playground wall to the wall opposite and back again was no slight trial of muscle and nerve; for the walls, which were not quite on a level, were arched at the top, and a fall into the lane meant broken bones. This jump, however, was one of Kingsley's favourite achievements. It is told of him that he climbed a tall tree to take an egg from a hawk's nest. He repeated this adventure for three or four days with impunity. One afternoon, however, the mother-hawk was on her nest, *and when the intruder thrust in his hand, dug her talons into it.* To most boys the sudden surprise of such an attack, apart

from the pain of the wound, would have been fatal. But Charles never flinched. Though his lacerated hand streamed with blood, he descended the tree as coolly as if nothing had happened. The composure with which he bore pain was wonderful. Having a sore finger, he on one occasion resolved to cure it by cautery. He heated the poker red-hot in the schoolroom fire, and calmly applied it two or three times until he thought he had attained his object.

Of his intellectual qualities I must say a few words. His strongest, most fervent taste was for physical science. For botany and geology he cherished an absolute enthusiasm, but he was fond of studying all objects of the natural world. To these pursuits he devoted whatever leisure he could spare from his congenial studies and from ordinary playground games. Nothing pleased him better than to sally forth, hammer in hand and his botanical tin slung round his neck, on some long expedition in quest of fern and plant, or in exploration of the bold cliffs of the Cornish coast. He does not seem to have had any special affection for the study of languages; but he attained to a very complete knowledge of Greek and Latin. Nor had he such a bias towards mathematics as to lead him to make the most of his opportunities for their study. His passion, says Derwent Coleridge,—from whom we borrow these particulars,—was for natural science and for art. Thus at sixteen years of age he wrote to a friend as follows:—"Teach her [that friend's sister] a love of nature. Stir her imagination, and excite her awe and delight by your example. Point out to her the sublime and terrible, the lively and joyous, and let her look on them both with the same overruling feeling, with a reference to their Maker. God is love; and the more we love Him, the more we love all around us." And again:—"I love paintings. They and poetry are identical—the one is the figures, the other the names of beauty and feeling of every kind. Of all the painters, Vandyke and Murillo are to my mind the most exquisitely poetical. Rubens is magnificent, but dreadful. His 'Day of Judgment' is the most awful picture I ever saw. It rapt me in awe and horror, and I stood riveted for many minutes in astonishment."

It will be seen that Charles Kingsley's boyhood had its interesting and attractive aspects, eminently characteristic of the *man*. Some of them may be advantageously studied

by my readers. His passionate love of nature, for example, I should rejoice to find reflected in them ; his simplicity, manliness, personal purity, truthfulness, and sympathy with all that was beautiful and good. To bring ourselves up to the level of a man of genius may intellectually be impossible, but it is never impossible to aim at the standard of the highest morality. The poet may surpass us in richness of fancy and melody of verse, the philosopher in the power of investigating the causes and significance of natural phenomena, the novelist in the art of weaving the destinies of imaginary individuals ; but none shall go beyond us if we are single in our aim and resolute in our purpose,—none shall go beyond us in the desire to live according to the law and pattern of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Some of my readers may have met with books illustrated by Thomas Bewick, the artist and wood-engraver, and have studied with delight his exquisite drawings. He was a man with a fine feeling for nature, and this feeling is impressed on all his works. His landscapes are wonderful for their truth of sentiment and design. Not less wonderful are his sketches of life and humanity ; sometimes full of tenderness, sometimes instinct with humour, and sometimes half in jest and half in earnest. Moreover, he has a wonderful power of pointing a moral. For instance, one of his woodcuts represents a ruined church mouldering away on an ascent near the sea. The winds and the waters alike have devastated it ; the arch has fallen in, the pillars lie prone and shattered. Even the last resting-places of the dead have not been spared by the insolent billows, and at each returning tide the surf beats upon the broken gravestones. Let us read what is written upon this grey slab :—"Erected to perpetuate the memory of"—No more ; the ocean has made havoc with the name which the fond imagination of man supposed would be read with respect by succeeding generations. Could you conceive of a more significant commentary on the vanity of human wishes ? Bewick's work is replete with these pregnant touches. I may give a specimen of his quiet humour. A peasant woman is hanging out her clothes, while a mendicant gipsy, with a child on her back, who has been *begging alms*, goes out of the garden, and carelessly leaves the *gate open*. A group of hens, espying their opportunity, troop *into the little plot*, unseen by the good dame, whose back is

turned towards them, while one struts across the clean white linen lying on the grass-plot, and soils it with the marks of her dirty feet. Following them closely comes a whole drove of young pigs, with the old sow at their heels—visitors of evil omen to that trim and blooming garden !

Bewick was an artist in his childhood, self-taught, using a piece of chalk for his brush, and the walls of his father's cottage instead of canvas. The various objects that pleased his observant eye he endeavoured to imitate. He drew men and animals, the old windmill, the older church, the bridge across the stream, the churchyard-gate, where the village gossips held their Sunday rendezvous. His parents soon discovered that whatever else they might wish him to be, nature had destined him for an artist ; and as they could not afford to give him a regular training, they did the next best thing, and apprenticed him to a Newcastle engraver. In an incredibly short time he learned to handle his tools with ease and power, and distinguished himself by his engraving on wood, of which beautiful art he was, in England at least, the reviver and second father. He introduced new and refined effects, colour and the gradation of tints, and improved the drawing and perspective. In a word, he made wood-engraving what it is, for since his time it has scarcely improved except in mechanical facilities. He loved his work, and he threw his whole soul into it ; and to the last he was as diligent of hand and as watchful of eye as in his boyish days. He took note of all he saw in his old age as in his youth, and never faltered or failed in his hearty sympathy with humanity and his love and admiration of the beautiful in God's visible world.

If you have ever been to the Crystal Palace or to any good exhibition of works of art, you will not fail to have noticed, in connection with some fine specimens of statuary, the name of the great Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen. He was the son of a wood-carver of Copenhagen, and his father was not only a man of indolent disposition and prone to self-indulgence, but by no means a first-rate workman. Unless successful in his first attempt, he always failed grievously ; all endeavours to remedy the defects of the original did but increase and exaggerate them. On one occasion he had to carve a lion for the figure-head of a ship, but, do what he could, the animal still remained a poodle. Thorwaldsen's home, therefore, was

not a happy one, though the boy found a source of happiness in his own thoughts. He was very partial to his mother's spinning-wheel, and he tells the following story about it:—
“One night, I remember well, I lay awake in my bed, for I could not sleep. The moon was shining brightly in at the window, and in the corner of the room I caught sight of my mother's spinning-wheel. The temptation was irresistible ; so I crept out of bed as quietly as I could and began playing with it. But the hum awoke my mother, who then remembered that she had forgotten to take out the weft before going to bed ; and, according to an old superstition, if that were the case, the fairies came and spun during the night. In her alarm she awoke my father, who soon discovered it was ‘little Bertie,’ and no fairy, engaged at the spinning-wheel ; so with a good smack for disturbing his night's rest, I was hurried into bed again.”

Two other reminiscences of his early boyhood are preserved. One day, accompanied by a “chum” of his, he had clambered up a neighbour's fence to pilfer some apples. As he was not tall enough to reach to the top, he stood on his companion's shoulders, and in this position was hanging over the paling when he heard approaching steps. His comrade immediately took to flight, and Thorwaldsen was thrown heavily to the ground, cutting his chin very seriously against a stone. The wound left a permanent scar, and taught the boy a lesson in honesty which he did not readily forget.

An open square called Kongens Nytorv was the favourite rendezvous for the boys of Copenhagen. Near the equestrian statue which adorns it was placed a sentry-box turning on a pivot, which was occupied only during the night. This was a great attraction to the boys. The fun consisted in one of their number getting inside, while the others spun the box round as rapidly as possible. The guard were instantly on the alert, and for the greater part of the day were actively employed in driving away the juvenile roysterers ; but, somehow or other, the latter always effected their escape, shouting and howling as they ran off, and returning, as soon as the soldiers were out of sight, to the forbidden spot. One day it chanced to fall to Thorwaldsen's turn to be swung round ; but when *the soldiers* came up as usual, the other boys scampered off, leaving poor little Bertie in his gyrating box, to fall into the

hands of the guard, who led him off a prisoner to the guard-house.

It does not appear that the boy Thorwaldsen received much education, though he gave clear evidence of exceptional abilities. He learned writing of his father; "schooling" he had none; but he showed an astonishing aptitude for modelling and drawing, so that, at the age of ten or eleven, a friend of the family was induced to obtain admission for him to the Arts Academy classes. He began in the first "sketching class," but worked so assiduously and made such progress that in less than a year he was admitted to the second. His father, however, allowed him little leisure for self-improvement. As soon as the boy returned from his class the carver's tools were placed in his hands, and he was required to assist in the paternal work. It is needless to say that he soon surpassed his father. His fancy was fertile, his taste exquisite, and his execution vigorous and finished.

In his sixteenth year he was removed to the Modelling School, where, for the first time, his genius found a fitting field for its development. He began to copy from nature and to work in marble; and Abildgaard, the artist, discerning his remarkable promise, watched over him with kindly interest and gave him much valuable instruction. Sensible of his deficiencies, the lad toiled with a rare enthusiasm to overcome them. The grand masterpieces of ancient sculpture, such as the so-called "Dying Gladiator," "The Quoit Thrower," and "The Apollo Belvidere,"—"lord of the unerring bow,"—were like an inspiration to him, while he pursued his studies from nature in a spirit of loving faithfulness. Emerging from the clouds that had overhung his boyhood, he was recognised by discerning judges as one who would assuredly rise to a high position in the world of art. After working through the day he generally repaired in the evening to the room of one or other of some brother artists, who formed among themselves a mutual improvement society. At these meetings subjects from the Old or New Testament were selected. Afterwards each criticised the other's work. Then followed a frugal meal, during which the students recited pieces of poetry in turn. The rapidity and ease with which Thorwaldsen executed his task were remarked by his companions. "It frequently happened," said one of them at a later time, "that while we were

discussing the proper treatment of the subject in hand, Thorwaldsen had completed it. He was seldom to be seen without a lump of clay or a piece of dough in his hand, at which he would be working away while we were conversing."

Though impeded in his boyhood by so many obstacles, the young sculptor's force of character, tenacious perseverance, and intelligent labour bore him onward steadily to the threshold of the temple of fame. In his twenty-first year he won the gold medal given for a bas-relief by the Academy of Arts, and thenceforward his success in life was assured. He realised the dreams which had cheered him in his hours of despondency, and became a great sculptor. He lived to enrich the world with those rare gifts of genius, "The Graces," and "Day" and "Night," "The Angel of Life," and "The Genius of Death."

It has been said of F. W. Faber, the devotional poet, that from first to last his life was *religious*. "In early childhood the things of God had been his joy; as he grew up he had sought painfully and anxiously the truth as it is in Christ, and then had given up all to find it. Every letter tells that it was his engrossing thought, every line of poetry bears the mark of heavenly aspiration; the golden words wherein his work will be still continued and the sweet music of his hymns of praise speak in language which cannot be mistaken the singleness of purpose with which he sought the interests of Jesus." Such a record as this cannot be written of many; but at least it would be well for us to remember that this life is not the all-in-all to which every faculty should be devoted, by which every thought should be absorbed. At the age of twenty, Faber wrote to a friend:—"Religious biography, which has ever been my favourite study, has this vacation occupied almost all my extra-classical hours, and it would be no difficult matter for me to compile a very respectable code of Christian experience from my late reading." Boys would be much the better for such reading occasionally; it would strengthen the graver and deeper elements of their character, would inspire them with more seriousness of purpose, and tone down an excessive levity. Unfortunately, they turn aside from the lives of the good, the lives of the pioneers of religion and the bearers of the cross, under an impression perhaps that everything connected with religion must needs be tedious and distasteful. And yet these lives

are often informed with the truest romance. What story of adventure and enterprise can surpass in interest the narrative of the missionary labours of John Williams? What can be fuller of pathos than that which describes the martyr's death of Bishop Patteson? Or, going back to earlier times, where shall we find a history more stirring than that of Ignatius Loyola, or of Savonarola, or St. Francis of Assisi?

From his earliest years Frederick Faber, we are told, gave promise of more than ordinary mental power, and his talents were prudently watched in their development by his parents, both of whom were persons of considerable ability. The power and individuality of his character soon made themselves felt. So great were his ardour and impulsiveness, that he entered upon work as if it were play and took up play as if it were work; everything that he embraced, or in which he was involved, was invested in his eyes with an importance which led him to speak of it in slightly exaggerated language. Self-reliant and conscious of his powers, he was too candid to conceal his singular gifts by an affectation of humility; and those friends who, well pleased, watched their ripening growth, were quick to prophesy for him a successful career.

The strain of poetry which so strongly coloured his character was strengthened by the influence of the picturesque scenery amid which he passed his early years. Exquisite are the landscapes which greet the traveller in the neighbourhood of Bishop Auckland; and along the course of the Wear and the Tees, as they tumble down in foam and uproar from the wild hills of Cumberland and Westmoreland, his eye will continually be attracted by the beautiful, the savage, or the sublime. His feelings of delight culminate when he comes in sight of the river-washed rock crowned by the spires and towers of episcopal Durham. These were the scenes which fed the fancy of the child. On reaching boyhood he was placed under the instruction of a clergyman at Kirkby Stephen, and thus made acquaintance with the Westmoreland lakes, and the dales and mountains which Wordsworth has immortalised in his song. Faber loved to wander among them alone. He describes himself in "the golden hours of schoolboy holiday" as

" Thoughtful e'en then, because of the excess
Of boyhood's rich abounding happiness ;

And sad when'er St. Stephen's curfew bell
Warned me to leave the spots I loved so well.
Each hazel copse, each greenly tangled bower,
Is sacred to some well-remembered hour—
Some quiet hour when Nature did her part,
And worked her spell upon my childish heart."

And in his preface to "Sir Lancelot" he enlarges on the glamour of imagination which he threw over the landscapes he loved so well. He tells the reader how in fancy he saw the forests replanted, and the chases once more filled with deer; again the heronries slanted over the edges of the lakes; once more the cry of the eagles aroused the echoes of Helvellyn; the castles rang with the din of arms; the flash of spear-tops lined the green paths that wound across the mountains; the blazing beacons told of the coming of the Scotch marauders; the sounds of sacred music awoke in abbey and chantry; once more the daily prayer of devout monks rose in the quiet monasteries among sequestered pastoral vales; and the Cistercian shepherds, in their characteristic white habits, tended the sheep on the fells high above the moorland granges. "As the warder on the battlements," he says, "or rather as the alchemist from his turret, saw that land of hills and woods and waters beneath the starlight long ago, so did I see it always in those ardent years. From earliest times it was to me the land of knightly days, and the spell has never been broken."

Frederick Faber was eleven years old when he removed for a short time to Shrewsbury School; afterwards he was transferred to Harrow, then under the direction of Dr. Longley, the future Primate. There he gave much of his time and thought to English literature, showing no special interest in the Greek and Latin classics. In the sports and recreations of his companions he joined only half-heartedly, but he was a good swimmer and a capital rider. His devotion to the work of self-improvement was, however, unre-laxing. It is told of him that one day, while spending his holidays with the late Sir Benjamin Brodie, he let fall the remark that he had been trying to calculate how much time he could save in his life by signing his name Frederick *without the final letter*. "As much time," answered Brodie, "as you have lost in making the calculation."

In his eighteenth year he matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, and a few months later he went into residence. "Our first recollection of him," writes a contemporary, "is of a graceful and intelligent boy just launched into a great public school, and next as a young man who had lately won for himself a high place in honours at Oxford. No one could have known him in those days without being attracted by a grace of person and mind rarely to be met with." But he has passed over the threshold of his boyhood, and we must leave him. Of his manhood we shall say no more than that the passionate love of poetry and nature which his early years had fostered deeply moulded his thoughts and feelings to the last. "Here in Oxford," he wrote at the age of twenty-one, "I literally live among the mountain scenes of my schoolboy days, and breathe the liberal air, and feel the mountain influences." And so it was in his after years, as most of the productions of his muse very distinctly testify.

The foster-mother of Michael Angelo was the wife of a mason employed in one of the quarries near his father's castle; and hence the great sculptor used in his jesting way to affirm that his skill was due to his having imbibed with his milk a love for his foster-father's mallet and chisels. Certain it is that at a very early age he evinced an artistic bias; that every moment he could snatch unobserved he employed in drawing whatever objects were at hand. The profession of an artist was then held in little respect, and both his father and uncle frowned at the idea of his following it up as a livelihood; by force as well as by persuasion, they sought to divert his energies into another channel. He was encouraged to persevere, however, by the friendly advice and help of a young artist, a pupil of the illustrious Ghirlandajo; and his father eventually grew weary of contending with nature and consented to his becoming a painter. The progress he had made by his strong assiduity and enthusiastic labour may be inferred from the fact that Ghirlandajo, on receiving him as a pupil, agreed to pay his father a monthly remuneration for his services.

His strenuous and elevated genius was quickly recognised by Ghirlandajo, whose other pupils the newcomer rapidly outstripped. The master himself submitted his designs to his criticism. One of these, round which the daring young

student had traced a bolder outline than Ghirlandajo had had the strength of mind to conceive, came into the possession of Michael Angelo's friend, Vasari, who showed it to him in after life. On seeing it, the artist, it is said, lamented that there should be so little difference between the first efforts of the boy and the productions of his riper years.

On another occasion he signalised the ardour and boldness of his genius by drawing, in Ghirlandajo's absence, the scaffolding and the pupils at their work. When the artist returned, his surprise at the merit and "dash" of the performance was so great, that he pronounced it the production of a master to be imitated, rather than the essay of a pupil to be taught. The young student, however, continued to labour at his profession, carefully examining the best compositions which came within his reach. It is said that he copied, among others, Martin Schoen's print of "St. Antony and the Devil," with the minutest accuracy, painting the different objects, such as fish and animals, with conscientious faithfulness, and, where possible, studying from nature. His imitations of the drawings of the elder masters were so well done that the connoisseurs of the day actually purchased them as antiques! This was a fraud, however, unworthy of his genius and character.

At this time Lorenzo de' Medici, the enlightened ruler of Florence, having conceived a desire to revive the arts of design, had collected in his beautiful Florentine garden some of the choicest specimens of the ancient sculpture as well as many of the masterpieces of contemporary painters. Of Ghirlandajo he inquired the names of his most promising pupils, in order that they might be allowed to study the various objects in his museum, and so to cultivate and refine their taste. Michael Angelo was one of those recommended, and it is hinted that his master was the more inclined to get rid of him because his jealousy was excited by his marvellous progress, and he found in him at once a trenchant critic and a powerful rival.

His genius was quickly detected by the watchful eye of Lorenzo. Vasari relates that Michael Angelo, having begged *a piece of marble* from some men employed in the prince's garden, carved out of it a satyr's mask in imitation of an

antique fragment. It was seen and admired by his patron, who, however, remarked in jest that he had made a mistake in equipping the mouth of an old man with a complete set of teeth. Next day he found the fault repaired; the young artist had dexterously broken away one of the front teeth, and drilled a hole in its place to represent the cavity which would have been made by its falling out. Lorenzo was so impressed by this instance of docility that he sent for Michael's father, and desired permission to take him entirely under his protection—a permission reluctantly accorded. Michael Angelo then took up his residence in his patron's palace, and was allowed a competent salary.

On the death of Lorenzo, he continued for some time in the employment of Lorenzo's unworthy successor, Piero de' Medici, who was utterly unable to appreciate his genius. During the winter this capricious tyrant compelled him to build up in the courtyard of his palace a colossal statue of Juno. It was a fortunate circumstance for the young sculptor that a revolution broke out in Florence which overthrew the Medici, and released him from the thralldom in which he was involved. We find him afterwards at Bologna and Venice, but before long he returned to his beloved Florence and set to work on a Sleeping Cupid. A strong prejudice then existed in favour of the antique, and no one believed it possible for a Florentine to equal the productions of the great classic sculptors. Michael Angelo was therefore advised to send his statue, which was warmly admired by men of judgment, to Rome, to undergo the usual processes of burial and subsequent discovery and resurrection, that it might be sold as an antique, and consequently fetch a higher price. The fraud succeeded; and the Sleeping Cupid was duly exhumed, passed off as a masterpiece from some ancient chisel, and purchased by the Cardinal St. Giorgio for two hundred ducats. Some rumour of the deception afterwards reaching the Cardinal's ears, he despatched a messenger to Florence to inquire into the circumstances. The messenger visited the studios of different artists under the pretence of inspecting their productions. On coming to Michael Angelo's he asked to see a specimen of his art. The young sculptor answered that at the time he had nothing finished, but while answering he took up a pen and dashed off a sketch of a hand. The Cardinal's agent, struck with the

vigour and originality of the style, inquired what was the best work he had completed. Forgetting the pseudo-antique which had been sent to Rome, Michael Angelo replied that it was a Sleeping Cupid, and described the statue in such terms as to show its identity with the Cardinal's purchase. The messenger then acknowledged the object of his journey, and advised the young artist to repair at once to Rome, as "the best means at once of cultivating his art and obtaining patronage."

There is, however, a more dramatic version of this story, according to which Michael Angelo, before burying his statue, broke off one of the arms and retained it. The statue was buried in a spot where he knew it would be quickly discovered, and on the said discovery taking place he mingled among the crowd of connoisseurs and critics whom it had drawn together, and listened, well pleased, to their rapturous panegyrics. At last one of them began to deny the competency of any living artist to produce anything of equal merit. He pointed out all its beauties, the grace of contour, the delicacy of expression, and protested that they belonged exclusively to the ancient art. Had only the missing arm been found, the statue would have been perfect. At this Michael Angelo gravely stepped forward, drew from under his cloak the broken limb, and, applying it to the statue, showed that it fitted exactly. He then acknowledged that the work was his own, and left the critics to digest the reproof he had administered to their ignorant prejudice.

On the fame which eventually crowned the efforts of Michael Angelo, on the grandeur of his genius—what Agostino calls,

"Di Michel Angiol la terribil via"—

on the number and variety and splendour of his achievements as sculptor, painter, architect, it is not my province here to dwell. I have shown what was the promise of his youth, and the world knows how it was fulfilled. But before I conclude this brief notice I would draw the reader's attention to some of his habits, as illustrative of his extraordinary force of character. To his singular temperance, both in boyhood and manhood, he attributed his power of studying for a greater *number of hours* daily than most of his contemporaries. "A *little bread* and wine was all he required for the chief part of

the day when employed at his work. Very frequently he rose in the middle of the night and resumed the labours of the day. When he did this, it was his practice to fix the candle on the summit of a pasteboard cap which he wore, in order that he might not intercept the light by his hands. He would also often sleep in his clothes, that he might be ready to proceed to work as soon as he rose, and sometimes would do so from having wearied himself too much to undress. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who loved to expatiate on the excellences of his character, has not omitted to point out his industry as worthy of imitation by artists of all ages."

On a tablet in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral you may read these words:—"Subtus conditur hujus ecclesiæ et urbis conditor Christopher Wren. Lector, si monumentum quæris, circumspecte"—(Beneath lies buried the builder of this church and city, Christopher Wren. Reader, if thou seekest for his monument, look around). And no nobler monument need man desire than that superb temple of the Reformed faith, with its lofty porticoes, its harmonious parts, and its swelling cupola. But Sir Christopher Wren has left to us other memorials of his fertility of invention and boldness of design as an architect in some of the parish churches and public buildings of London, in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, and Trinity College Library at Cambridge.

He belonged to those great men of whose after eminence their opening years have afforded unerring indications. His genius was of quick growth; it flowered early. His invention of a new astronomical instrument at the age of thirteen is recorded, and he wrote an account of it in a Latin epistle dedicated to his father. In his childhood and youth he suffered much from ill health; but he did not allow this circumstance to retard his studies, and we may fairly say that he was not less distinguished for industry than for intelligence. He did not suffer his faculties to run to waste, but cultivated them with an assiduous hand. And such was the satisfactory character of his progress, that at the age of fourteen he was sufficiently advanced to be sent to Wadham College, Oxford. There his attainments, in spite of his boyishness, procured him the friendship and patronage of the most illustrious scholars, such as Bishop Wilkins and Dr. Oughtred, the latter of whom mentions him as having acquired, at the age of sixteen, a surprising

knowledge of mathematics and other branches of scientific philosophy. John Evelyn refers to him as a "prodigious young scholar," a "rare and early prodigy of science," a "miracle of youth."

The "ruling passion" in boyhood cannot always be safely accepted as pointing out a career in life, for boys do not always know their own minds, and their tastes are apt to be affected by the fuller knowledge of later years. The choice of a profession or a vocation is one of those critical matters in which they are bound to listen to the advice of their parents, and to be influenced by their judgment and experience. In some cases, however, the bias is so strong that any attempt at repression must be unsuccessful, and is, therefore, injudicious. The great admiral, Lord St. Vincent, whose title recalls the famous victory he won over the Spanish fleet, was the son of a solicitor, who gave him a good education and destined him to follow his own profession. "My father's favourite plan," he says, "was frustrated by his own coachman, whose confidence I gained, always sitting by his side on the coach-box when we drove out. He often asked what profession I intended to choose. I told him I was to be a lawyer. 'Oh, don't be a lawyer, Master Jackey,' said the old man; 'all lawyers are rogues.' About this time young Strachan (father of the late Admiral Sir Richard Strachan) came to the same school, and we grew great friends. He told me such stories of the happiness of a sea-life, into which he had lately been initiated, that he easily persuaded me to quit the school and go with him. We set out accordingly, and concealed ourselves on board a ship at Woolwich."

I need hardly say that this is not an example for admiration, and such a breach of duty might easily have been attended with serious consequences. But it is clear that the boy's adventurous disposition would never have found satisfaction in a professional life; and that the quarter-deck of a ship, and not a stool in a solicitor's office, was the fitting sphere for his daring and ardent spirit.

After an absence of three days, young Jervis made his appearance at home, but he could not be induced to return to school; and his father being away at the time, his perplexed and *tearful* mother confided her sorrows to Lady Archibald Hamilton, wife of the then governor of Greenwich Hospital. This lady did not take so serious a view of the matter as Mrs. Jervis

did ; she thought the Royal Navy a very good and honourable profession, and undertook to procure the boy a situation on board a ship-of-war. Meantime his uncle, at his mother's request, remonstrated with him on what they conceived to be a pernicious resolution. All to no purpose ; Jervis was determined that he would be a sailor, and would *not* be a lawyer. Shortly afterwards he was introduced to Commodore Townshend, who, in the "Gloucester," was then going out to Jamaica as commander-in-chief. He consented to take him as a midddy, and forthwith the boy was ordered to prepare for "a life on the ocean wave." His equipment would now be considered grotesque. His coat was not cut according to his *then* stature, but according to what he might be expected to attain ; hence it reached down to his heels, and was too long and full in the sleeves. He wore a dirk at his side, and donned a gold-lace cap. Thus attired, he presented himself, in charge of his uncle, at a very early hour to the commodore, who made his appearance in a nightcap and slippers, and in a rough *sea-breezy* kind of voice—such as I have observed to be peculiar to men accustomed to the roar of wind and waters—asked how soon he would be ready to join his ship. "Directly," answered the future admiral. "Then you may go to-morrow morning," said he, "and I will give you a letter to the first lieutenant." His departure, however, was delayed for a few days, after which, as the "Gloucester" was in dock, he was received on board the hulk or receiving-ship. As soon as the admiral's vessel was ready for sea he proceeded to Jamaica, and being of a bold and active disposition, volunteered on board several small vessels, and so saw a good deal of service.

Of those days of his apprenticeship and trial the old sea-king was wont to relate an anecdote which carries with it a very useful moral. "My father," he said, "had a very large family with limited means. He gave me twenty pounds at starting, and that was all he ever gave me. After I had been a considerable time at the station, I drew for twenty more, but the bill came back protested. I was mortified at this rebuke, and made a promise, which I have ever kept, that I would never draw another bill without a certainty of its being paid. I immediately changed my mode of living, quitted my mess, lived alone, and took up the ship's allowance, which I found to be quite sufficient ; washed and mended my own

clothes, made a pair of trousers out of the ticking of my bed ; and by these means having saved as much money as would redeem my honour, I took up my bill ; and from that time to this I have taken care to keep within my means."

For Adam Smith, the author of "The Wealth of Nations," a book which has largely influenced the progress of political science in Europe, there was no such rough experience in his boyhood. For the career which he adopted he was fitted by long and careful training. In his early years his passionate love of books attracted the notice of his schoolfellows, who also remarked his extraordinary powers of memory, and those habits of mental abstraction which clung to him throughout life. His taste for reading was confirmed and strengthened by the circumstance that the weakness of his constitution prevented him from sharing the recreations of his companions. But such was the excellence of his temper, and so warm and generous were his feelings, that their affection for him was not diminished by habits which schoolboys generally regard as unsocial. At the age of fourteen he entered the University of Glasgow, where he vigorously prosecuted the study of mathematics and natural philosophy ; but his writings show that no inconsiderable portion of his time was also given to history, poetry, and polite literature. He was removed to Oxford at the age of seventeen, and remained at that famous seat of learning for seven years.

Newton in his childhood evinced a taste for philosophical and mechanical inventions, which foreshadowed the future author of the "Principia." Caring little for the usual childish pastimes, he provided himself with a collection of small saws, hammers, and other implements, such as he could hold in his tiny grasp, and these he handled with such intelligent dexterity that he successfully constructed models of many kinds of machinery ; he also made hour-glasses, acting by the descent of water, which indicated the time with great accuracy. In the neighbourhood of his home a new windmill was erected, the mechanism of which he showed a strong desire to examine ; and accordingly he so closely watched the workmen that he was able at length to fashion a perfect model of it, which *turned with the wind*, and worked as well as the mill itself ; *but with this difference* : he introduced into the interior a *mouse*, which he called the *mill*, because it directed the mill

and ate up the flour, as a real miller might do. To the successful accomplishment of these ingenuities a certain acquaintance with drawing was necessary, and he therefore applied himself, though without a master, to the study of this art, covering the walls of his closet with all kinds of designs, either copies or taken from nature. His attention was so largely absorbed by these mechanical pursuits, which already implied (says Biot) remarkable powers of observation and invention, that, for a time, he neglected his classical studies, and, unless stimulated by special circumstances, would allow children of very inferior intellectual capacity to outstrip him. But having on one occasion been surpassed by a classfellow generally regarded as a dunce, he determined to prevent the recurrence of such a mortification, and quickly succeeded in placing himself at the head of all.

After the boy had thus, for some years, developed his intellectual powers by his own assiduity, and worked out for himself a channel in which they might be advantageously employed, his mother recalled him to employ him in the supervision of her farm and household. For such a vocation he had neither the taste nor the talent. He did his best to obey, but the natural instincts cannot be entirely crushed. As the old Latin adage puts it, you cannot expel nature with a fork. As bidden by his mother, he jogged on market-days to Grantham to dispose of corn and other articles of produce, and purchase the necessities required for the household, but his heart was not in the work. A confidential servant was sent with him to teach him his business. Newton, however, after riding into the town, left his attendant to buy and sell, while he himself retired to the house of a friendly apothecary, and enjoyed the sweet companionship of some old book until the hour of return arrived. Sometimes he did not proceed even so far as the town, but, pausing on the road, give himself up to study under the shelter of a hedge till the servant came back. Of such a youth you might make a good philosopher, but never a farmer, not even a bad one! His soul thirsted after knowledge, and felt an insuperable repugnance to rural pursuits. So soon as he could escape from them he withdrew to the shelter of some leafy tree, and, "*patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi*," read away the happy hours; or modelled in wood, with his knife, such machines as had

engaged his curiosity. To this day is shown at Woolsthorpe a sundial of his invention affixed to the wall of the house in which he lived. It faces the garden, and is at the height to which a child can reach. This strong passion, which impelled him to the study of science, overcame at length the obstacles which the thrift or prudence of his mother had thrown in his way. One day his uncle found him under a hedge, with a book in his hand, absorbed in thought, and discovered that he was working out a mathematical problem. This illustration of the boy's serious temper induced him to press upon his mother the advisability of sending him to the grammar school at Grantham. She consented, and he remained there until his eighteenth year, when he removed to Cambridge and was entered at Trinity College.

Gibbon, the historian of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," has left in his autobiography some interesting records of his boyhood. He was a victim to disease and debility, which prevented him from undergoing any regular course of education, and led to a frequent change of schools. The longest period he passed at any one school was two years at Westminster, where, at the expense of "many tears and some blood" (for in Gibbon's time the birch was the true pedagogic sceptre), he purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax. But this lack of formal instruction was more than made up by his application at home. He was an enthusiastic, a persistent reader; and it is interesting to note that before he was well in his teens he had already gone over a considerable portion of the historical field afterwards occupied by his immortal work. "My indiscriminate appetite," he says, "subsided by degrees into the historic line, and since philosophy has exploded all innate ideas and natural propensities, I must ascribe the choice to the assiduous perusal of the 'Universal History' as the octavo volumes successively appeared. This unequal work referred and introduced me to the Greek and Roman historians, to as many, at least, as were accessible to an English reader. All that I could find were greedily devoured, from Littlebury's lame 'Herodotus' to Spelman's valuable 'Xenophon'; to the pompous folios of Gordon's 'Tacitus,' and a ragged 'Procopius' of the beginning of the last century." He adds, that the continuation of *Eachard's* "Roman History" accidentally fell in his way, and

proceeds:—"To me the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new, and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube, when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast. . . . I procured the second and third volumes of Hewell's 'History of the World,' which exhibits the Byzantine period on a larger scale. Mahomet and his Saracens soon fixed my attention, and some instinct of criticism directed me to the genuine sources. Simon Ockley first opened my eyes, and I was led from one book to another till I had ranged round the circle of Oriental history. Before I was sixteen I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks, and the same ardour urged me to guess at the French of D'Herbelot, and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pocock's 'Abulfaragius.'"

Happily for Gibbon, a great change in his constitution took place as he approached his sixteenth year. His diseases passed away; he grew into strength and vigour; and his father, rejoicing at this physical revolution, carried him off to Oxford, and entered him as a gentleman commoner at Magdalen College. Those were not the palmy days of the great University; there was no discipline, no enlightened system of instruction, and Gibbon learned nothing. He spent fourteen months at Magdalen, and afterwards referred to them as "the most idle and unprofitable" of his whole life. At the end of that period he was sent to Lausanne, and placed under the charge of a Calvinist minister, who was an honest man and a good friend, but neither a deep nor a various scholar. Again Gibbon had to help himself, to depend on his own energies and powers. He did so successfully, and in the honourable company of self-taught men must always be placed among the foremost. With remarkable courage and untiring perseverance, he took up the whole series of the Latin classics and went through them—historians, poets, orators, and philosophers—in chronological order, from the days of Plautus and Sallust to the decline of the Roman language and empire. In one year he read—and not only *read*, but *studied* (the two words are not always identical in meaning)—the following authors:—Virgil, Sallust, Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Quintus Curtius, Justin, Florus, Plautus, Terence, and Lucretius. The list almost takes away

one's breath. Justly has it been said of him that he had in him "the root of all scholarship," that is, the most diligent accuracy and an unlimited faculty of taking pains. He did not confine himself to reading; he practised continually Latin prose composition, and the method he adopted I would commend to the imitation of my readers. "I translated," he says, "an epistle of Cicero into French, and after throwing it aside till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I re-translated my French into such Latin as I could find, and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator." It was not a new method, as Gibbon supposed, but dates back to the days of Roger Ascham.

I have already referred to Dr. Arnold as the great reformer of our public schools, and the powerful advocate, if not the founder, of the modern system of education. It is worth while to consider him as a boy, and to see whether in his case, too, the tree was inclined as the twig was bent. His biographer observes that we may trace the beginnings of some of his later interests in his earliest amusements and occupations. Some of his childish years were spent at Cowes in the Isle of Wight in the flush of England's great war with Napoleon and half of Europe behind him; and Arnold never lost the recollection of the impression which the excitement of naval and military affairs then produced. The sports which he loved to share with his playmates were the sailing of rival fleets in his father's garden, or the mimic performance of the battles of the Homeric heroes, with such substitutes as he could procure for spear and shield, while he recited their several speeches from Pope's translation of the "Iliad." From his childhood he was exceedingly partial to ballad poetry, and all his own compositions as a boy ran in the same direction. He earned the appellation of Poet Arnold by his composition of a play in which his school-fellows were introduced as *dramatis personæ*, and of a long poem of "Simon de Montfort," in imitation of Scott's "Marmion." Before he was seven years old he wrote a little tragedy on "Percy, Earl of Northumberland."

His forwardness, however, in history and geography was *far more remarkable*, and this was due to his strong memory *as well as to his clear understanding and abounding energy.*

One of his few reminiscences of his father was that he received from him, at three years old, a present of Smollett's "History of England," as a reward for his accuracy of the stories connected with the portraits and pictures of the successive reigns; and at the same age he would sit at his aunt's table, arranging his geographical cards, and at a glance recognising by their shape the different counties of the dissected map of England.

His reading was chiefly in historical books, and before he left school he had read Priestley's "Lectures on History," Russell's "Modern Europe," Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," and Mitford's "Greece." In Greek, he loved best to dwell on the narratives of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon; in Latin, on those of Livy and Tacitus.

After he went to Oxford he retained his liking for Thucydides and also for Aristotle, and however he became more sensible (says Judge Coleridge), some few years later, of the importance of the poets in classic literature, this passion endured to the last. "Those who knew him intimately or corresponded with him" will recollect "how deeply he was imbued with the language and ideas of the former;" while his fondness for the latter ended in his valuable edition of that author.

His bodily recreations were walking and bathing. He specially delighted in making, with two or three congenial companions, what he called a skirmish across the country, on which occasions the skirmishers deserted the road, jumped fences, and leaped ditches, or fell into them. He was delicate in appearance, and gave no promise of great muscular strength, yet his form was light, and he was capable of walking long distances and enduring much fatigue. To the last moment of his life he evinced the same predilections. His manhood had all the tastes and feelings of his youth, only they were more fully developed and better regulated. In his after life, as in his boyhood, were apparent the same passion for the sea and shipping and his favourite Isle of Wight; the same love of external nature, the same manners in recognising the features of a country and its conspicuous positions, or the fairest points of a landscape.

Let us transcribe the following character of Arnold in his youth:—"In mind vigorous, active, clear-sighted, industrious,

and daily accumulating and assimilating treasures of knowledge; not averse to poetry, but delighting rather in dialectics, philosophy, and history, with less of imagination than reasoning power; in argument bold almost to presumption, and vehement; in temper easily roused to indignation, yet more easily appeased and entirely free from bitterness; fired, indeed, by what he deemed ungenerous or unjust to others, rather than by any sense of personal wrong." Happy the boy on whom such an eulogium as this can be pronounced with truth!

One of the biographers of Abraham Lincoln, the American President, remarks that his poverty of books was the wealth of his life. He had so few books that he mastered them thoroughly, assimilated them; made them, as it were, bone of his bone and blood of his blood. Those who have access to large libraries are apt to become desultory readers. They skim the surface only, and pass from book to book, as a traveller by an express train hurries from town to town, knowing only their names. Abraham Lincoln, "Old Abe," or "Honest Abe," as his countrymen loved to call him, is a remarkable instance of a man rising from a humble station to one of the highest distinction and authority by mere force of character. He was born in a Kentucky log-hut; his father a backwoodsman, "an endless story-teller, physically powerful, but hating hard work;" his mother habitually depressed, though regarded by her neighbours with considerable admiration because she could read and write. At the age of nine he was left motherless, but his father before then had found a new home in Indiana, and a very comfortless one it was! Built of rough logs, his home had neither door, floor, nor window. He was too idle to supply it with the most necessary furniture. He and his wife had a few three-legged stools; the only bed was made in a singular manner. "Its head and one side were formed by a corner of the cabin, while the bed-post was a single crutch cut from the forest. Laid upon this crutch were the ends of two hickory poles, whose other extremities were placed in two holes made in the logs of the wall. On these sticks rested 'slats,' or boards rudely split from trees with an axe, and on these slats was laid a bag filled with dried leaves. This was the bed of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, and into it—when the skins hung at the cabin en-

trance did not keep out the cold—little Abraham and his sister crept for warmth."

Lincoln's father married again, and his second wife proved an admirable mother to the neglected boy. She found him in rags, and clothed him decently; dirty, and she washed him; roughly used, and she treated him with affectionate consideration. He repaid her with loving devotion. At an early age he was seized with a desire for self-improvement. He was at school for a year only, but having learned to read and write, he felt that he had at his command the two great keys to education. After labouring all the day in the fields under the stern eye of his father, he snatched some hours from sleep in order to work out sums and read by the light of the kitchen fire. And he persevered, though he met with scant encouragement from his kith and kin; one of his cousins always speaking of him as a lazy fellow, who was constantly "reading, scribbling, writing, ciphering, writing poetry, and the like." He persevered, though hampered by all the drawbacks of poverty and toil. Leaving his home, he was employed as a deck-hand on a Mississippi trading vessel, from which he rose to a clerkship in a store; and still devoting his leisure to the acquisition of knowledge, was able, in due time, to settle down as a lawyer in Illinois. By the influence of his personal qualities he raised himself eventually to the post of chief magistrate of the American Republic, and he lives in history as a man who by his diligence, his tenacious energy, and his rectitude surmounted the obstacles of low birth and adverse fortune.

There is a charming story told of the great Italian poet Dante. One day, as he was passing through a street in that beautiful city of Florence, which owes its most enduring fame to his genius, he heard a blacksmith beating iron upon the anvil, and singing some of his verses like a song, jumbling the lines together, mutilating and confusing them, so that Dante felt as if he had received a great injury. He said nothing, but entering the blacksmith's shop, he seized upon his hammer and pincers and scales, and many other things, and flung them out into the road. The blacksmith, sharply turning round upon him, said:—"What are you doing? Are you mad?" "What are *you* doing?" said the poet. "I am working," replied the blacksmith, "at my proper business, and you are

spoiling my work, throwing it out into the road." Said Dante :—"If you do not like me to spoil your things, do not spoil mine." "What thing of yours am I spoiling?" inquired the man. And Dante replied :—"You are singing something of mine, but not as I made it. I have no other trade but this, and you spoil it for me."

I think we may use this story to point a moral. Boys are too fond of doing that which is not their proper work ; of attempting that which they cannot perform ; of singing (as it were), and singing badly, when they should be hammering the red-hot iron on the anvil. Now, all that we have seen in the preceding pages of the boys who, as men, have risen to eminence, or have gained a reputation for doing their work well, has shown us that they were constant to a fixed purpose, steady in their pursuit of a given object, intent upon the one great task which they set before themselves as a task to be mastered and achieved. Wren, Newton, Mozart, Murray, each directed all his efforts into that particular channel which seemed best suited to his capacity. Like Dante, he kept to his "trade," and did his best in it. This concentration of aim and endeavour is infinitely more essential to success than brilliant talents, which, indeed, if not guided and restrained by a cool judgment, are often a snare and a loss to their possessor.

Writing of Dante, I am reminded of another anecdote, which conveys a somewhat similar lesson to the former. The scene, however, changes to a street in Siena, where, having received a book which had been promised to him, he fell to reading it on a bench outside an apothecary's shop, leaning his breast against the bench, with his back to the street. There he stood all day, from early morn to vespers, wholly unconscious that the town was alive with the pomp and mirth of a great festival, and that the merrymakers were constantly passing and repassing behind him. "There were dances of pretty maidens," says Boccaccio, "and games of goodly and gallant youths," with shouts and songs and various musical instruments. "How was it that you took no notice of so fine a *festa*?" said some one to the poet. Lifting his grave eyes from his book, Dante simply answered, "I heard nothing."

I do not commend to my readers so complete an absorption as that of Dante, but I would have them apply the story to themselves to this extent : that if they would excel in manhood,

they must, in boyhood, shut a deaf ear to pleasure, and devote their time and energies and labour to study, and disregard the dances of young maidens and the games of goodly and gallant youths, going on around them. That is the one great lesson which the anecdotes I have collected in this chapter, and the boyhood of all good and famous men, clearly and distinctly teach. It is embodied in the old proverb, "Make hay while the sun shines"—that is, in your early years, in those days of warm and glowing sunshine which are granted to us before we plunge into the smoke and dust of the world's battle. It is a grand thing to live through a pure, cheerful, industrious boyhood, making it the preparation for, and introduction to, a manhood not less pure, cheerful, or industrious. It is in this sense that the child is truly "father of the man," and that our days, from youth to old age, may be

"Bound each to each by natural piety."







CHAPTER X.

THE IDEAL BOY.

“ How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill !
Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace dear gifts to lend ;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend ! ”

—SIR HENRY WOTTON.

A pleasant fancy—“ Boys will be boys ”—What boys *might* be—An ideal boy described—What he should *not* be—The ideal boy will be “ a gentleman ”—Thackeray quoted—Will be studious, (obedient, firm of heart—Will study nature—Will do his duty—Will cultivate religious habits—Prayer—If the ideal cannot be fully attained, we can get near it—Concluding exhortation.



SOMETIMES in the intervals of class-work, when I, the teacher, have rested for a while, weary with a constant struggle against thoughtlessness and ignorance and obstinacy, I have amused myself with picturing to my “ mind's eye ” the figure of an *Ideal Boy* ; a boy who should give no trouble to his instructors and no heartaches to his parents—a boy spotless and blameless, in whom there should be no guile—a boy among boys, as pure and perfect as Tennyson's King Arthur among the knights of his famous court. I am not so foolish as to expect that the ideal shall ever be realised, any more than I expect to meet with an ideal man, or in my own person to exemplify

“ That perfect monster which the world ne'er saw.”

Our grandmother's adage that "boys will be boys" is not likely to prove untrue in the time of any one of us ; and, to the end of the chapter, boys, like men, will have their faults and be guilty of their follies. But there is no reason that I know of why boys, like men, should not learn to amend their ways ; should not strive to approach, if it be impossible to attain, the perfect standard. And it may help them towards this admirable result if we consider here, in my last pages, the characteristics that would distinguish the ideal boy—if only we could get him !

Now, by an ideal boy I don't mean an effeminate, feeble weakling, who shuns temptation and then boasts as loudly as if he had faced and resisted it. I don't mean the hero of goody-goody stories, who has always some trite morality on his lips, and assumes such a pragmatical air of propriety that one is possessed with a keen longing to kick him. I don't mean a home pet, a juvenile fribble, who is afraid to dirty his fingers or use his legs, just as he is afraid or unwilling to go in for an earnest struggle for knowledge, who cries over his Homer, whimpers over his algebra, and stutters over his Latin verses. I don't mean the boy who *plays* at being good, who airs his excellences in the public eye, parades his Bible where he thinks his assumed piety will attract favourable notice, and *ko-toos* like a Chinaman before those who are in authority. No ; my ideal boy must be manly and honest in his tastes and his habits ; must stick to his lessons with heartiness, and "go in" for cricket with readiness. I don't like a namby-pamby, because it is also an insincere and unreal, boyhood. I like boyishness in boys, if the boyishness be generous, unaffected, straightforward, reasonable, and innocent. Sham and pretence and hypocrisy are always repulsive, but never more so than in our boys.

The ideal boy will, as a matter of course, be a gentleman—*i.e., generous* ; courteous in his home, among his friends, among his schoolfellows ; respectful without being servile to his superiors ; well-mannered without being patronising to his inferiors. He will eschew loud tones and rough ways ; will govern his tongue and his temper ; will listen to advice with deference, and to reproof with humility. "What is it to be a gentleman?" says Thackeray. "It is," he replies, "to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise, and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most

graceful, outward manner." And, therefore, my ideal boy shall be a gentleman. He shall not be a sneak or a bully; he shall neither cringe to the strong, nor tyrannise over the weak. To his masters he shall be obedient, for they have a right to require obedience of him; he shall be respectful, because the true gentleman always respects those who are wiser, more experienced, better informed than himself. He shall apply himself to his lessons with a single aim, seeking knowledge for its own sake, and earnestly striving to make the best possible use of such faculties as God may have endowed him with. He shall do his best to store his mind with the high thoughts of great thinkers and poets, and cultivate his taste by a careful study of all that is beautiful and pure. In his sports and recreations he shall seek to excel, if excellence can be obtained by a moderate expenditure of time and energy; but he shall remember that though it is a fine thing to have a healthy body as the corollary (so to speak) of a healthy mind, it is neither necessary nor admirable to develop a muscular system like that of a "navvy." He shall study Nature with an observant eye and in a devout spirit, recognising in the planet as in the wild-flower the handiwork of Divine power, and tracing everywhere the benignant presence of Divine love. Whatever falls to his hand to do, he shall do it with all his might, assured that God loves not the idle or dishonest worker. He shall remember that life has its duties and responsibilities as well as its pleasures; that these begin in boyhood; and that they cannot be evaded without injury to heart and mind and soul. He shall train himself in all good habits, in order that these may accompany him easily in later life; in habits of method and order, of industry, perseverance, and patience. He shall recollect that every new achievement of principle smooths the way to future achievements of the same kind; and the precious fruit or purchase of each moral virtue is to set us on higher and firmer vantage-ground for the conquests of principle in all time coming. He shall resolutely shut his ears and his heart to every foul word, every improper suggestion, every profane utterance; guarding himself against the first approaches of sin, which are always the most difficult to resist, because always the most insidiously made. He shall not think it a brave or a "plucky" thing to violate established order, to defy authority, to ridicule age or poverty or feebleness, to pamper

the appetite, to imitate the "fast," to throw away valuable time, to neglect precious opportunities, to leave undone that which ought to be done, and to do that which it were better to leave undone. He shall love truth with a deep and passionate love, abhorring even the shadow of a lie, even the possibility of a falsehood! True in word, true in thought, true in deed! so shall—

" His actions to his words accord ; his words
To his large heart give utterance due ! "

And finally, he shall seek, with lowly heart, and in a spirit of love, and faith, and hope, to imitate, as far as is possible to our weak human nature, that One Pure and Holy Life in which we put our trust; that Life which, closing amid the shadows of Calvary, bequeathed to us not only an example but a promise. He shall read his Bible, for it tells of the beauty and simplicity of that Life, and reveals to us the surpassing love which inspired and consecrated it; and he shall strengthen himself by frequent resort to prayer, which brings the soul into communion with its Saviour and its God. "Let prayer," says a quaint writer, "be the key of the morning," with which we open to ourselves the tasks and duties of the day, and "the bolt of the evening," with which we shut the door upon those tasks and duties before giving up ourselves to rest and repose.

Such is my conception of the ideal boy. That any one can fully and entirely realise it, I cannot hope, and I do not ask; but surely it would be worth while to try and *get near it*. We can none of us be perfect, but we can aspire after perfection. No man will reach the mountain-top who crouches or creeps at the base, appalled by the loftiness of peaks and pinnacles that seem to "strike the stars." He who would succeed must go forward and onward with a resolute spirit; never quailing, never losing heart; neither affrighted by the cold white glacier nor daunted by the rugged precipice. To him who hopes and strives all things are given. To the boy who steadily does his duty will be granted such a measure of success as his most sanguine dreams have not anticipated. To my readers *I say then*, Do your best; be as honest and diligent as you can; be resolute to live a pure and honourable life; speak the truth like English boys who in due time will be English gentle-

men ; strenuously employ the fresh and fertile hours and the young and unwearied energies of your boyhood ; be merry in season, for it is good to be merry and wise ; be loving and dutiful sons, be affectionate brothers, be loyal-hearted friends ; and then, in the autumn of your lives, you will look back to those happy boyish days without regret and without shame. The outer life of a true English boy should be "thoroughly attractive to others." He should be "simple, honest, straightforward, unpretending, gentle, kindly ; his conversation cheerful and sensible ; he should be ready to share in all blameless mirth, indulgent to all save sin." He should be, as a boy, what, with God's blessing, we trust he will continue to be as a man.







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